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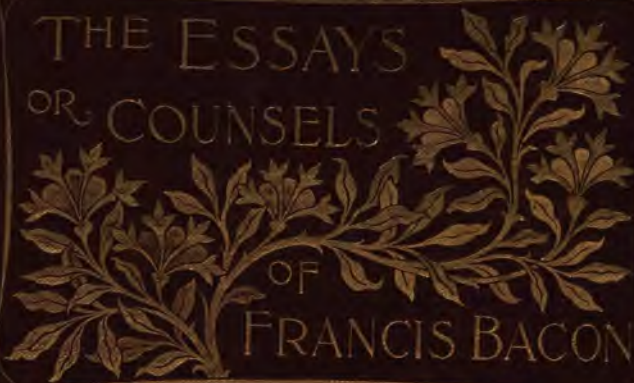
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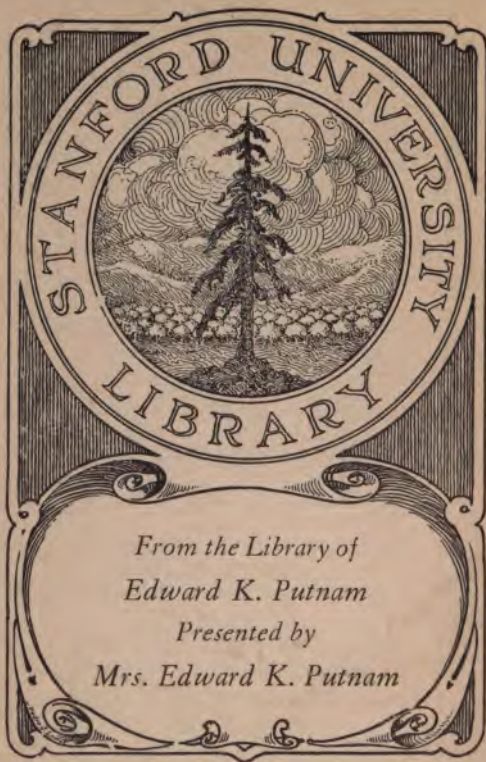
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THE ESSAYS
OR, COUNSELS

OF
FRANCIS BACON





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BACON'S ESSAYS

“Neither repetitions nor fancies”

FRANCIS BACON

THE
ESSAYS OR COUNSELS
CIVIL AND MORAL
OF
FRANCIS BACON
VISCOUNT ST. ALBAN, BARON VERULAM

Edited with an Introduction and Notes

By MELVILLE B. ANDERSON



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INTRODUCTION.

ORIGINAL EDITIONS AND DEDICATIONS.

THE *editio princeps* of Bacon's Essays, published in the year 1597, was a small octavo volume containing also his "Religious Meditations" (in Latin), and his "Table of Colors, or Appearances, of Good and Evil" (in English). The essays were but ten in number, as follows : —

1. Of Study.
2. Of Discourse.
3. Of Ceremonies and Respects.
4. Of Followers and Friends.
5. Suitors.
6. Of Expense.
7. Of Regiment of Health.
8. Of Honor and Reputation.
9. Of Faction.
10. Of Negotiating.

The "Epistle Dedicatory" was as follows : —

"To M. ANTHONY BACON *his dear Brother*.

"LOVING AND BELOVED BROTHER, — I do now like some that have an orchard ill-neighbored, that gather

their fruit before it is ripe to prevent stealing. These fragments of my conceits were going to print; to labor the stay of them had been troublesome and subject to interpretation; to let them pass had been to adventure the wrong they mought receive by untrue copies, or by some garnishment which it mought please any that should set them forth to bestow upon them. Therefore I held it best discretion to publish them myself as they passed long ago from my pen, without any further disgrace than the weakness of the author. And as I did ever hold there mought be as great a vanity in retiring and withdrawing men's conceits (except they be of some nature) from the world, as in obtruding them, so in these particulars I have played myself the inquisitor, and find nothing in them contrary or infectious to the state of religion or manners, but rather, as I suppose, medicinable. Only I disliked now to put them out, because they will be like the late new half-pence, which, though the silver were good, yet the pieces were small. But since they would not stay with their master, but would needs travel abroad, I have preferred them to you that are next myself, dedicating them, such as they are, to our love: in the depth whereof, I assure you, I sometimes wish your infirmities translated upon myself, that her Majesty mought have the service of so active and able a mind, and I mought be with excuse confined to these contemplations and studies for which I am fittest. So commend I you to the preservation of the divine Majesty. From my chamber at Gray's Inn, this 30th of January, 1597.

"Your entire loving brother,

"FRAN. BACON

If Bacon thought to prevent stealing by gathering his fruit before it was ripe, he reckoned without the book pirates, who flourished then as now. Mr. Arber and Mr. Wright enumerate several evidently unauthorized editions during the author's life. These, and the translations into French and Italian, attest the immediate popularity of the Essays. In the year 1612 Bacon published a second author's edition of his Essays, including nine of the original group (all but that "Of Honor and Reputation"), considerably altered and enlarged, with twenty-nine new ones,—in all thirty-eight. The title was, "The Essaies of S^r Francis Bacon Knight, the Kings Solliciter Generall," and the dedication to his brother-in-law as follows:—

"To my loving brother, SIR JOHN CONSTABLE, Knight.

"My last essays I dedicated to my dear brother, Master Anthony Bacon, who is with God. Looking amongst my papers this vacation, I found others of the same nature; which if I myself shall not suffer to be lost, it seemeth the world will not, by the often printing of the former. Missing my brother, I found you next in respect of bond of near alliance, and of strait friendship and society, and particularly of communication in studies. Wherein I must acknowledge myself beholding to you. For as my business found rest in my contemplations, so my contemplations ever found rest in your loving conference and judgment. — So, wishing you all good, I remain,

"Your loving brother and friend,

"FRA. BACON."

Bacon's intention had been to dedicate this edition to Prince Henry, who died in this year (1612). Some time before this date Bacon had caused a faithful transcript of the Essays to be made, as if for publication. This MS. is fortunately preserved, if in a slightly mutilated form, in the British Museum, and contains thirty-four essays, of which two — "Of Honor and Reputation," and "Of Seditions and Troubles" — are not found in the edition of 1612. Belonging to this MS., though now separated from it, is the following unprinted dedication.

*"To the most high and excellent PRINCE HENRY,
PRINCE OF WALES, DUKE OF CORNWALL, and
EARL OF CHESTER.*

"It may please your Highness: Having divided my life into the contemplative and active part, I am desirous to give his Majesty and your Highness of the fruits of both, simple though they be. To write just treatises requireth leisure in the writer and leisure in the reader; and therefore are not so fit, neither in regard of your Highness's princely affairs, nor in regard of my continual services. Which is the cause that hath made me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called *Essays*, — the word is late but the thing is ancient. For Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if one mark them well, are but Essays, — that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles. These labors of mine I know cannot be worthy of your Highness —

for what can be worthy of you? But my hope is they may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety. And although they handle those things wherein both men's lives and their pens are most conversant, yet what I have attained I know not, but I have endeavored to make them not vulgar, but of a nature whereof a man shall find much in experience, little in books; so as they are neither repetitions nor fancies. But howsoever, I shall most humbly desire your Highness to accept them in gracious part, and to conceive that if I cannot rest, but must show my dutiful and devoted affection to your Highness in these things which proceed from myself, I shall be much more ready to do it in performance of any your princely commandments. And so, wishing your Highness all princely felicity, I rest your Highness's most humble servant."

The third and final edition of the *Essays*, published under the supervision of the author, was that of 1625. It contains the thirty-eight essays of the edition of 1612, together with the two essays noted above as omitted in that edition, and eighteen new ones, — fifty-eight in all. All of the earlier essays are more or less revised, and many of them are very greatly altered and enlarged. This final edition is the one upon which all modern texts are necessarily based. Comparison of this text with the earlier ones is, however, extremely interesting, both as revealing Bacon's methods of revision, and, still more, as throwing a strong light upon the development of his character

under the tutorship of experience. Such comparison of the three printed texts and one MS. above described has been made easy by the intelligent industry of Professor Edward Arber, to whose "Harmony of the Essays" the present editor is very greatly indebted.

Between the years 1618 and 1621 there were two translations of the Essays into Italian, and two into French. For several years before his death, Bacon had in mind a Latin translation. The evidence of this is most interesting, as showing his opinion of the relative permanence of English and Latin. In a letter to his friend, Toby Matthew, written some three years before Bacon's death, he says : —

"It is true my labors are now most set to have those works which I had formerly published, — as that of Advancement of Learning, that of Henry VII.. that of the Essays, being retractate and made more perfect, — well translated into Latin, by the help of some good pens which forsake me not. For these modern languages will, at one time or other, play the bankrupts with books; and since I have lost my time with this age, I would be glad, as God shall give me leave, to recover it with posterity."

The Italian translation had been entitled "Moralì," — Moral Saws. To this and to the proposed Latin version Bacon refers in the following passage from his celebrated letter to Fath gentio (1625) : —

"I wish to make known to your Reverence my intentions with regard to the writings which I meditate and have in hand; not hoping to perfect them, but desiring to try; and because I work for posterity; these things requiring ages for their accomplishment. I have thought it best, then, to have all of them translated into Latin and divided into volumes. The first volume consists of the books concerning 'The Advancement of Learning'; and this, as you know, is already finished and published, and includes the Partitions of the Sciences; which is the first part of my Instauration. The 'Novum Organum' should have followed; but I interposed my moral and political writings, as being nearer ready. These are: first, the History of the Reign of Henry the Seventh, King of England; after which will follow the little book which, in your language, you have called 'Saggi Morali.' But I give it a weightier name, entitling it 'Faithful Discourses, or the Inwards of Things.' But these discourses will be both increased in number and much enlarged in treatment."

In the dedication to Buckingham of the final English edition of the Essays, Bacon expresses his faith "that the Latin volume of them, being in the universal language, may last as long as books last." But he did not live to see this definitive volume through the press, though there is evidence that he superintended the work of translating. This Latin edition was first published in 1638 by Dr. Rawley, together with other works, "civil and moral." The title is that given by Bacon in the letter to Fulgentio: "*Sermones fideles, sive inte-*

riora rerum." It is said that among the "divers hands" by whom the translation was made were "the learned and judicious poet," Ben Jonson, and the famous philosopher, Thomas Hobbes. That their work was most carefully revised by Bacon is inferred from the circumstance that there are innumerable alterations and additions, some of them important, which surely no one but the author would have ventured to make. So it is that this edition is of great value for the light it throws upon the author's real meaning in many passages, which would, by themselves, be subject to misinterpretation or dispute.

RECENT EDITIONS.

To the student, the most useful modern texts the Essays are undoubtedly the exact reprint made by Mr. W. Aldis Wright and Prof. Arber. The text of the Essays given by Mr. James Spedding in his monumental edition *Bacon's Complete Works*, is also an exact reprint of the edition of 1625, except that spelling and punctuation are modernized. Mr. Spedding's reprints, without modernization, the editions of 1597 and 1612. These reprints attest the care and scholarly accuracy of their makers. A careful and detailed collation of them, that, in point of accuracy, Mr. Arber falls below both Mr. Wright and Mr. Spedding ;

in nearly if not quite all the cases of divergence between the readings of Asher and Wright I have found in Spedding's text confirmation of the reading of Wright.

Of modern popular editions, I have carefully examined that of Whately and Heard (Boston, 1879), of Little, Brown & Co. (Boston, 1884), of Henry Morley in Cassell's National Library, 1889; of Selby (London, 1889), of David Scott (London, 1890), of Dr. E. A. Abbott (seventh edition, London, 1886), and an edition printed for John Bumpus and others (London, 1893). Of these, by far the most useful and scholarly edition is that of Dr. Abbott, whose notes are the fullest and the most satisfactory that I have found. Yet the text presented by Dr. Abbott is inferior to that of one or two of the other editions examined; indeed, it is so full of slips of almost all degrees of seriousness as to be, not merely uncritical, but absolutely untrustworthy. In view of this fact, one is amused to find a recent editor pluming himself upon having "most carefully collated" his text with that of Dr. Abbott, in order to secure "the most authoritative reading possible." In one case Dr. Abbott actually substitutes one word for another, and then gravely explains in a note the meaning of the substituted word (*affecting* for *effecting*, Essay LV., ¶ 2, first sentence).

THE PRESENT EDITION.

The text of the present edition is based upon a thorough-going collation of the reprints, which we owe to the accurate care of Mr. Arber, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Spedding, of the final edition printed in Bacon's lifetime and under his supervision. A reprint in every respect exact of this final edition can be of no value except to students of literature, for it is, to use Mr. Arber's words, "disfigured by a perfect eruption of capital letters, and is often cut up into almost inch lengths with commas." In point of punctuation and capitalization it is, in truth, so singular, even among books of that time, as to be a typographical curiosity. In other respects, however, it is a remarkably accurate piece of typography. This union of singularity and correctness is most readily explained upon the assumption that Bacon, or his secretary, read the proofs with care, but that they left matters merely typographical to the printer. It is noteworthy that the second edition of the *Essays* (1612) has no such peculiarity; as Mr. Arber remarks again, "It almost reads like a modern book."

Obviously, the modern editor of the *Essays* must exercise his own taste in the matter of punctuation. This I have endeavored to do in a conservative way, taking advantage of the labors of others every step. I have also followed, but not slavishly, Dr. Abbott's excellent precedent in introduc-

more perspicuous system of paragraphing than that which obtains in other editions. I have been able to correct some serious errors which disfigure all the modernized texts (Spedding's alone excepted), and have avoided scores and hundreds of corruptions which appear sporadically, to a greater or less extent, in all the modern popular editions examined. In preparing this text I have striven, in the spirit of the modest words of self-gratulation prefixed by Mr. Spedding to his great edition of the Complete Works: ". . . though I must not suppose that my mind has observed everything that my eyes have looked at, I am not without hope that the text of this edition will be found better and more faithful than any that has hitherto been produced." Translations of the Latin quotations not explained in the text have been placed among the foot-notes. It is hoped that the notes — which will bite no one who lets them alone — may not too painfully illustrate, for the thousand and first time,

"How commentators each dark passage shun,
And hold their farthing candle to the sun."

THE FORM.

The various forms taken by the modern Essay under the hands of such masters as Lamb, De Quincey, Macaulay, Emerson, and Stevenson, have been primarily determined by the exigencies of the

great reviews and popular magazines. These, in turn, are the natural outcome of the vast multiplication of books incident to the spread of the reading habit and to the specialization of research. There are now regiments of specialists, armies of students, and whole populations of readers, whose mercurial curiosity will not stay for the labored treatise. The general public demands, not "works," but the results of work. The student who would broaden his intellectual horizon cannot afford to keep his eye forever fixed upon the navel of a quarto volume. Hence the evolution of the review, first quarterly, then monthly, finally fortnightly, determining the scope and structure of the nineteenth century essay, — a new literary organ, difficult to define ; something not a book, nor a treatise, nor a dissertation : long enough to instruct, to interest, to suggest a thousand things, and (what is perhaps its most important note) short enough to be read at a single sitting.

The sixteenth century essay was no such thing. The first writer of essays was Montaigne, whose first volumes were published when Bacon was about twenty. Bacon's own brother, Anthony, met Montaigne at Bordeaux, and the two seem to have had some intimacy. John Florio's translation made the "*Essais*" popular, in the best sense of the word, in England ; Shakspeare and Ben Jonson possessed and read Florio's book. Doubtless Francis Bacon read it too, and the original a

well, but there is no evidence: his first and only mention of Montaigne is in the essay "Of Truth" (1625). We have already seen Bacon, in the letter to Prince Henry, pointing back to Seneca as an essayist. Perhaps his indebtedness to Montaigne for the essay form is not very great; certainly there is little in common between the terseness of Bacon and the charming garrulity of the lively and candid Gascon.

Mr. Arber has discovered an English essayist before Bacon, but only a year before. In 1596 there appeared a book entitled "Anonymous his Remedies against Discontentment." A sentence is worth quoting, as showing that, with respect to brevity, "Anonymous" was of the school of Bacon rather than of the school of Montaigne:—

"For I was long since thus persuaded, that the receipts which we seek to calm and appease our mind withal, ought to be gathered into the fewest words and shortest precepts that may be, that we may always have them about us."

This recalls Bacon's definition of his essays as "certain brief notes set down rather significantly than curiously,"—or, in our more commonplace dialect, rather suggestively than systematically.

In fact, both Bacon and Montaigne use the word "essay" in a sense very close to the original one (Latin *exagium*, a weighing). The twin words "essay" and "assay" had already parted com-

pany, but still remained within hail of each other. The two distinct forms of composition which Bacon and Montaigne severally styled Essays, had this in common: each was an assay of some topic, and a "try" at its treatment. The title expressly waived any attempt at completeness, still less at exhaustiveness; the essay was not yet a body, but a mere group of *disjecta membra*. In the first Baconian essays the subject was a mere heading, under which the author's *obiter dicta* were jotted down with the utmost conciseness. That this was his first conception of the essay is clearly shown in the edition of 1597 by the frequent use of the paragraph mark (§), to emphasize the breaks in the sense. As he returned to these essays from time to time throughout a period of thirty years, retouching and adding, they naturally grew into something more organic; and perhaps some of the later essays are about as coherent, and in their way complete, as some of Emerson's.

LITERARY STYLE.

The natural effect of this method of composition upon the style is obvious. In his treatise concerning "The Advancement of Learning," Bacon had scope and verge to roll out his mind,

"Long crumpled, till creased consciousness lay bare."

But in the Essays the great fabric lies in creases. Or, rather, we perceive no continuous web, but the maker cuts us off little snippets, which we carry about with us as samples of the product of those marvellous looms.

Mr. Swinburne makes the following suggestive comparison between the style of Bacon and that of Ben Jonson: —

“The dry, curt style of the statement, docked and trimmed into sentences that are regularly snapped off or snipped down at the close of each deliverance, is as alien and as far from the fresh and vigorous spontaneity of the poet's, as is the trimming and hedging morality of the essay on ‘Simulation and Dissimulation’ from the spirit and instinct of the man who ‘of all things loved to be called honest.’”

But Ben Jonson himself has far more aptly characterized the style of the Essays, in words that will live with the eternity of Bacon's fame. Jonson is speaking of Bacon's oratory, but the reader may judge whether his words do not fit the Essays as well: —

“... Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking; his language (where he could spare or pass by a jest) was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces.”

What follows, although of less immediate pertinence, must not be omitted : —

“ His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spake, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.”

It will be noted that these weighty sentences are, to repeat Mr. Swinburne's words, “ docked and trimmed ” as much as any of Bacon's. Before assenting to Mr. Swinburne's disparagement of the style of the Essays, we should consider whether this style does not grow out of the peculiar character of the work. As we have already seen, Bacon makes a careful distinction between his “ just treatises,” requiring “ leisure in the writer and leisure in the reader,” and his Essays, which are merely “ certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously,” and which, he hopes, “ may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety.” Surely in such writings as these a “ dry curt style,” with sentences “ regularly snapped off or snipped down,” is the best style, being the style into which the subject-matter naturally crystallizes.

To assume that this is the distinctively Baconian style is a great, though a frequent, mistake. When, as in “ The Advancement of Learning,” Bacon un-

dertakes to write "just treatises," the deep broad current of his thought sometimes sweeps grandly onward with a "compulsive course" suggestive of other parallels than that of Ben Jonson. Especially in touching upon that belief, which was a religion with him, in the greatness and fruitfulness of the undiscovered country, — the kingdom of experimental knowledge, — to which he aspired to be the Columbus, does Bacon dilate with real prophetic fervor. Even in the English translation from the Baconian Latin the solemn enthusiasm and the warm imaginative coloring are by no means lost. Who can read without a certain swelling of the heart the following noble and characteristic passage from the (translated) Preface to the (Latin) *Natural History*?

"If therefore, there be any humility towards the Creator, any reverence for, or disposition to magnify, his works, any charity for man and anxiety to relieve his sorrows and necessities, any love of truth in nature, any hatred of darkness, any desire for the purification of the understanding, we must entreat men again and again to discard, or at least set apart for a while, these volatile and preposterous philosophies which have preferred theses to hypotheses, led experience captive, and triumphed over the works of God; and to approach with humility and veneration to unroll the volume of Creation, to linger and meditate therein, and with minds washed clean from opinions to study it in purity and integrity. For this is that sound and language which 'went forth into all

lands,' and did not incur the confusion of Babel; this should men study to be perfect in, and, becoming again as little children, condescend to take the alphabet of it into their hands, and spare no pains to search and unravel the interpretation thereof, but pursue it strenuously and persevere even unto death."

No better and more instructive comment upon his style and method of composition has ever been made than that of his friend and first biographer, Dr. Rawley. I make no apology for quoting it here: —

"I have been induced to think, that if there were a beam of knowledge derived from God upon any man in these modern times, it was upon him. For though he was a great reader of books, yet he had not his knowledge from books, but from some grounds and notions from within himself; which, notwithstanding, he vented with great caution and circumspection. His book of '*Instauratio Magna*' (which in his own account was the chiefest of his works) was no slight imagination or fancy of his brain, but a settled and concocted notion, the production of many years' labor and travail. I myself have seen at the least twelve copies of the '*Instauratio*,' revised year by year one after another, and every year altered and amended in the frame thereof, till at last it came to that model in which it was committed to the press; as many living creatures do lick their young ones, till they bring them to their strength of limbs.

"In the composing of his books he did rather drive at a masculine and clear expression than

any fineness or affectation of phrases, and would often ask if the meaning were expressed plainly enough, as being one that accounted words to be but subservient or ministerial to matter, and not the principal. And if his style were polite, it was because he would do no otherwise. Neither was he given to any light conceits, or descanting upon words, but did ever purposely and industriously avoid them; for he held such things to be but digressions or diversions from the scope intended, and to derogate from the weight and dignity of the style."

BACON AND SHAKSPERE.

Inasmuch as the question of the Baconian authorship of the Shaksperian drama has become of late one of the most popular of literary topics, it may be well to point out in conclusion one or two of the chief notes of difference between the style and method and tone of Bacon in the Essays, and the style and method and tone of Shakspeare in the Plays.

I would premise by saying that the silence of Bacon concerning the great dramatist is, to the student, not very remarkable. Shakspeare was to him simply one of a group of popular authors writing in a language which Bacon despised as an ephemeral dialect. He is not satisfied until he gets all his important books embalmed in Latin. He speaks of readers being excluded from reading

"The Advancement of Learning" because of "the privateness of the language wherein it was written," and of the Latin version he writes, "It is a book I think will live, and be a citizen of the world, as English books are not." Strange as this belief may now seem, in Bacon's time the balance of probabilities was perhaps in its favor. At all events, he shared in the prepossession of the lettered class of his day, that no serious literary work had been done, or could be done, save in the classical tongues. Bacon's silence concerning Shakspeare is no whit stranger than his silence concerning many another poet and dramatist of the time, and far less strange than his silence concerning Kepler's calculations, and Napier's logarithms, and Galileo's theory of the acceleration of falling bodies. Not being a writer of literary history, he was not bound to make mention of literary men, while as a natural philosopher he *was* bound to take advantage of the memorable discoveries of scientific men. Yet he totally ignored Kepler, Napier, Wright, and Harvey, barely mentioned Harriott, sneered at Gilbert as having "himself become a magnet," and at the whole body of illustrious philosophers who made the Copernican theory their working hypothesis, as "these new carmen which drive the earth about."

In fact, Bacon, despite his prodigious activity of intellect and his almost unparalleled capacity for work, had not the leisure to master the history of

scientific discovery, much less to keep abreast of the rapid advance of research in his own day. Yet, considering his lifelong invalidism, and his activity as a lawyer, a councillor, a courtier, a high functionary of state, his known achievements in letters and philosophy are indeed marvellous. Professor Gardiner, no mean judge, is of the opinion that Bacon was the greatest statesman, as well as the greatest philosophic thinker, of his time and land. It will be difficult to convince any one who has acquainted himself with the recorded activity of this too busy life, that this same man should have had time and energy for the production of any considerable unacknowledged literary work. Moreover, as he repeatedly and with the most patent sincerity assures men in his private letters and elsewhere, his deepest life was centred in his inspiring project of teaching men to *know*. His "contemplative ends" were as vast, he insists, as his "civil ends" were moderate. If he found himself early deflected by unusual stress of circumstances from the course he had laid out, compelled to subordinate for the time being his vast contemplative ends to his civil ends, and forced at last to leave his great design for future ages to complete, there is not the slightest probability that he made this immense sacrifice for the sake of any work merely literary and artistic. In fact, there is almost every evidence to the contrary.

It has been urged that Bacon's admitted imagi-

native power proves his spiritual kinship to the author of the Shakspeare plays. But Bacon's imagination is not, like that of Shakspeare, creative. His imaginative force exhibits itself principally in the tracing of hidden or remote resemblances, sometimes fanciful and sometimes real, but always ancillary to an argument. When he has occasion to deal with poetical material, he either transmutes it into prose or presses it into the service of his theory. Thus, in his "Wisdom of the Ancients," the fables of the Greek mythology, which have charmed countless generations of poets, are gravely interpreted as allegories figuratively concealing and handing down the wisdom of prehistoric ages. In Shakspeare, on the other hand, all history and all knowledge are pressed into the service of the Muse. Shakspeare's aim and method are, in short, artistic ; Bacon's, didactic and scientific.

The Essays are an epitome of worldly wisdom, a handbook for him who wishes to work men to his ends, a digest of most of the arts and shifts whereby the crafty and the unscrupulous succeed in that scramble for place and wealth in which the weaker goes to the wall. The product of profound and dispassionate intelligence, of wide experience aided by a furtive eye ever on the alert to surprise those meaner sides of character which men reveal only when off their guard, the essays flash the light of a dark lantern into many secret places of human

character. Nor do they fail to illuminate what we should be glad enough to leave hidden,—the dubious and petty side of the author's personal character. In speaking of Cunning, of Negotiating, of Seeming Wise, of Simulation and Disimulation, he seems perfectly at home. True, Shakspeare shows the same curious observation of the shady side of human nature. There is no suggestion in the essay "Of Cunning," for example, that could not have been inferred from the practice of such personages as Iago, or Edmund in "Lear." The difference is that, while in the Essays these observations are coldly formulated, in the plays they are embodied in unmistakably real and living types of human character. Bacon shrewdly notes the shifts and tricks of men who would fain seem wiser than they are, inserts a few connective words and phrases, and you have his essay "Of Seeming Wise." Shakspeare alone had the secret of putting a still greater fund of observation, and a profounder, because more sympathetic, insight, into such a character as that of Polonius.

That one and the same man might first have created the characters in the plays and then made the generalizations in the Essays, may be possible. But there is a moral as well as an artistic contrast, which renders the gulf between the two works too wide for the reach of the most gigantic human creative capacity. Bacon's Essays have no imaginative

and emotional *lift*. The fine imaginative touches that illuminate them here and there are mere analogies or figures, which fail to penetrate beyond the understanding to what we call the soul. To that deepest self in man, Francis of Verulam seldom appeals. He appeals to it profoundly, indeed, in those solemn and energizing proclamations summoning men to enter upon their heirship over Nature through experimental knowledge. But in the Essays there is nothing of this. The writer's tone is adjusted to the level of the counting-house and the cabinet. There are unfailing shrewdness, abundant wit, useful admonition, and all the wisdom possible to him who looks at life in what Bacon was so fond of calling "a dry light."

How refreshing and liberalizing, after dwelling in this dry light of intellect purged of human feeling, to emerge into the warm sunlight of Shakspeare's genius! One feels at once the distinction between the worldly and the human. To borrow one of Matthew Arnold's favorite quotations, Shakspeare "sees life steadily, and sees it whole." Bacon sees life steadily enough, but he sees it as a half-moon; the life in the sympathies and the affections lies in the shadow. "Are not the pleasures of the intellect greater than the pleasures of the affections?" he exclaims in his "Praise of Knowledge." So it comes about that Shakspeare, without sacrifice of shrewdness or severity of

judgment, imparts a broader, because a more generous, impression of human life. Where Bacon's wit coruscates, Shakspeare's humor penetrates and reveals. While Bacon is furtively eying his man, if haply he may espy some quaint whim or darling foible, Shakspeare is making an interpretation, the more subtile because sympathetic, of the entire character. In short, Bacon is endowed with one of the most comprehensive of intellects, but he has little sympathy and no sentiment. Sympathy and sentiment are out of place in science ; yet I deem it no paradox to assert, that, with a greater endowment of sympathy and sentiment, Bacon would have been not only a better man but also a greater philosopher. His genuine zeal "for the relief of man's estate" (*philanthropia* he termed it) would then have prompted him to sacrifice high place and royal favor in the interest of those splendid philosophical plans which seemed so visionary to his contemporaries, but which we recognize as so entirely rational. He might have become something more than a sign-post pointing to a road that he could not travel ; and what was more important to himself, he might have been spared that sad shipwreck of character and fortune. He might yet have been to us what he seemed to Walton, "the great secretary of Nature and all knowledge" ; he would have rendered impossible that sneer of Harvey, "He writes philosophy like a Lord Chancellor," and pointless the profane gibe of King

James touching the "Novum Organum": "Tis like the peace of God, — it passeth all understanding." He might have realized all that he had dreamed of being and doing; and still he would not have been Shakspeare.

M. B. A.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA,

August 25, 1890.

DATES RELATIVE TO FRANCIS BACON AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

Francis Bacon b. 22 Jan., 1561.

Lope de Vega b. 1562.

Michael Angelo d. 1564.

William Shakspeare b. 1564.

Marlowe b. 1564.

Galileo b. 1564.

Kepler b. 1571.

Battle of Lepanto, 1571.

Bacon student at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1573.

Ben Jonson b. 1573.

Titian d. 1576.

Bacon admitted at Gray's Inn, 1576.

In France with Sir Amias Paulet, 1577-78.

His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, d. 1579.

Camoens d. 1579.

Bacon admitted Utter Barrister, 1582.

Grotius b. 1583.

Bacon member of Parliament, 1584.

Sir Philip Sidney d. 1586.

Mary Queen of Scots executed, 1587.

Destruction of the Spanish Armada, 1588.

- Thomas Hobbes b. 1588.
Essex the Queen's favorite, 1589.
Montaigne d. 1592.
Marlowe d. 1593.
Bacon incurs the Queen's displeasure, 1593.
Essex aids Bacon in his unsuccessful suits for the
place of Attorney-General, and then for that of
Solicitor-General, 1593-95.
Torquato Tasso d. 1595.
Essex gives Bacon an estate, 1595.
Descartes b. 1596.
Essays (first edition), 1597.
Oliver Cromwell b. 1599.
Spenser d. 1599.
Hooker d. 1600.
Calderon b. 1600.
Execution of Essex, 1601.
Anthony Bacon d. 1601.
Tycho Brahe d. 1601.
Queen Elizabeth d. 1603.
Dr. Gilbert d. 1603.
Bacon knighted by King James, 1603.
King's Counsel, 1604.
The Advancement of Learning, 1605.
Corneille b. 1606.
Bacon married to Alice Barnham, 1606.
Solicitor-General, 1607.
Virginia colonized, 1607.
John Milton b. 1608.
Bacon's mother, Lady Ann, d. 1610.
Essays (second edition), 1612.
Attorney-General, 1613.
Napier d. 1615.

Shakspeare and Cervantes d. 1616.
 Bacon Privy Councillor, 1616.
 Coke suspended from the Chief-Justiceship, 1616.
 Bacon Lord Keeper, 1617.
 Lord Chancellor, 1618.
 Baron Verulam, 1618.
 Execution of Raleigh, 1618.
 Landing of the Pilgrims, 1620.
 The Novum Organum, 1620.
 Viscount St. Alban, 1621.
 Sentenced for bribery, 1621.
 Molière b. 1622.
 Pascal b. 1623.
 James I. d. 1625.
 Essays (third edition), 1625.
 Mme. de Sévigné b. 1626
 Francis, Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, d. 9
 April, 1626.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

*To the Right Honorable my very good Lord the DUKE
OF BUCKINGHAM his Grace, Lord High Admiral of
England.*

EXCELLENT LORD, — Solomon says, “A good name is as a precious ointment”; and I assure myself such will your Grace’s name be with posterity. For your fortune and merit both have been eminent, and you have planted things that are like to last. I do now publish my Essays, which, of all my other works, have been most current; for that, as it seems, they come home to men’s business and bosoms. I have enlarged them both in number and weight; so that they are indeed a new work. I thought it therefore agreeable to my affection and obligation to your Grace, to prefix your name before them, both in English and in Latin. For I do

conceive that the Latin volume of them (being in the universal language) may last as long as books last. My "Instauration," I dedicated to the King ; my "History of Henry the Seventh" (which I have now also translated into Latin) and my portions of "Natural History," to the Prince ; and these I dedicate to your Grace ; being of the best fruits that, by the good increase which God gives to my pen and labors, I could yield. God lead your Grace by the hand.

Your Grace's most obliged and faithful servant,

FR. ST. ALBAN.

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ESSAYS CIVIL AND MORAL.

I. — OF TRUTH.

(1625.)

“WHAT is truth?” said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting¹ free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sect of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that when it is found it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor: but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians² examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it that men should love

¹ Aiming at.

² Probably Lucian.

lies : where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets ; nor for advantage, as with the merchant ; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell : this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day ; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. { Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the Fathers, in great severity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum*,¹ because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. } But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt ; such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it ; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it ; and the

¹ The wine of demons.

belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it — is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense ; the last was the light of reason ; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos ; then he breathed light into the face of man ; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet¹ that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well : “ It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea ; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below : but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth ” (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene) “ and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below : ” so always, that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth to have a man’s mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business, it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man’s

¹ Lucretius. Bacon’s habit is to quote from memory, or to paraphrase, as he does here.

nature ; and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver : which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent, which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne¹ saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge : saith he, " If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth is as much as to say that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men." For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood, and breach of faith, cannot possibly be so highly expressed as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men : it being foretold that when Christ cometh " He shall not find faith upon the earth."

II. — OF DEATH.

(1612 ; somewhat enlarged, 1625.)

MEN fear death as children fear to go in the dark ; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly,

¹ This is the only direct quotation in the *Essays* from Montaigne.

the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself what the pain is if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb: for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher and natural man it was well said, "*Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa.*"¹ Groans and convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks, and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible.

It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy, when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear pre-occupateth it: nay, we read, after

¹ "The trappings of death affright us more than death itself."—Seneca. The following sentence is very much condensed from Montaigne's Essay on Death.

Otho the emperor had slain himself, pity, which is the tenderest of affections, provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca adds niceness and satiety: "*Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest.*"¹ A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft over and over. It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men till the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment: "*Livia, conjugii nostri memor vive, et vale.*"² Tiberius in dissimulation; as Tacitus saith of him: "*Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant.*"³ Vespasian in a jest; sitting upon the stool: "*Ut puto, Deus fio.*"⁴ Galba with a sentence: "*Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani;*"⁵ holding forth his neck. Septimius Severus in despatch: "*Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum;*"⁶ and the like.

Certainly the Stoics bestowed too much cost

¹ Whenever a Latin quotation is not translated in a foot-note, it is to be understood that Bacon translates it.

² Farewell, Livia; and remember our married life.

³ Tiberius was losing his strength and vitality, but not his dissimulation.

⁴ As I suppose (purge), I am becoming a god.

⁵ Strike, if it be for the good of the Roman people.

⁶ Make haste, if there is anything more for me to do.

upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better saith he, "*qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponat naturæ.*"¹ It is as natural to die as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit is like one that is wounded in hot blood, who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good doth avert the dolours of death. But above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is *Nunc dimittis*,² when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations. Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy. — "*Extinctus amabitur idem.*"³

III. — OF UNITY IN RELIGION.

(1612; greatly enlarged, 1625.)

RELIGION being the chief band of human society, it is a happy thing when itself is well contained within the true band of unity. The quarrels and divisions about religion were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of

¹ Who accounts the end of life as one of Nature's boons.

² Now lettest thou thy servant depart.

³ Let him die, and you 'll love him to-morrow.

the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies than in any constant belief. For you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors and fathers of their church were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that he is a jealous God ; and therefore his worship and religion will endure no mixture nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words concerning the unity of the Church : what are the fruits thereof, what the bounds, and what the means.

The fruits of unity, next unto the well-pleasing of God, which is all in all, are two : the one towards those that are without the Church ; the other towards those that are within. For the former : it is certain that heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals ; yea, more than corruption of manners. For as in the natural body, a wound, or solution of continuity, is worse than a corrupt humor ; so in the spiritual. So that nothing doth so much keep men out of the Church, and drive men out of the Church, as breach of unity ; and therefore, whensoever it cometh to that pass that one saith, " Ecce in deserto ; " ¹ another saith, " Ecce in penetralibus ; " ² that is, when some men seek Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in an outward face of a church, that voice had need

¹ Behold he is in the desert.

² Behold he is in the closet. (Bacon's Scriptural quotations are from the Vulgate)

continually to sound in men's ears, "Nolite exire," go not out. The doctor¹ of the Gentiles, the propriety of whose vocation drew him to have a special care of those without, saith: "If an heathen come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad?" And certainly it is little better when atheists and profane persons do hear of so many discordant and contrary opinions in religion; it doth avert them from the Church, and maketh them "to sit down in the chair of the scorners." It is but a light thing to be vouched in so serious a manner, but yet it expresseth well the deformity: there is a master of scoffing,² that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library sets down this title of a book, "The Morris-dance of Heretics." For indeed every sect of them hath a diverse posture or cringe by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politics,³ who are apt to condemn holy things.

As for the fruit towards those that are within, it is peace; which containeth infinite blessings: it establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the Church distilleth into peace of conscience; and it turneth the labors of writing and reading of controversies into treatises of mortification and devotion.

¹ Teacher.

² Rabelais.

³ Politician. For the form of the word compare *heretic*.

Concerning the bounds of unity: the true placing of them importeth exceedingly. There appear to be two extremes. For to certain zelants all speech of pacification is odious. "Is it peace, Jehu? What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me." Peace is not the matter, but following and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty reconcilements: as if they would make an arbitrement between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided; which will be done, if the league of Christians, penned by our Saviour himself, were, in the two cross clauses thereof, soundly and plainly expounded: "He that is not with us is against us;" and again, "He that is not against us is with us;" that is, if the points fundamental, and of substance, in religion, were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already; but if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God's Church by two kinds of controversies. The one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contra-

diction. For, as it is noted by one of the Fathers, Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the Church's vesture was of divers colors: where-upon he saith, "*In veste varietas sit, scissura non sit;*"¹ they be two things, unity and uniformity. The other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity, so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree. And if it come so to pass in that distance of judgment which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing, and accepteth of both? The nature of such controversies is excellently expressed by St. Paul, in the warning and precept that he giveth concerning the same: "*Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ.*"² Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms so fixed, as, whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the mean-

¹ Let there be variety, but no division, in the garment.

² Avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called (Vulgate).

ing. There be also two false peaces or unities : the one, when the peace is grounded but upon an implicit ignorance ; for all colors will agree in the dark : the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points. For truth and falsehood in such things are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image : they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the means of procuring unity : men must beware that in the procuring or muniting of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and temporal, and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion. But we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword, or like unto it : that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences ; except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state : much less to nourish seditions, to authorize conspiracies and rebellions, to put the sword into the people's hands, and the like, tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God. For this is but to dash the first table against the second ; and so to consider men as Christians as we forget that they are men. Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of

Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed :

"Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum." ¹

What would he have said if he had known of the massacre ² in France, or the powder treason of England? He would have been seven times more epicure and atheist than he was. For as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion, so it is a thing monstrous to put into the hands of the common people. Let that be left unto the Anabaptists and other furies. It was great blasphemy when the devil said, "I will ascend, and be like the Highest;" but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, "I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness." And what is it better to make the cause of religion to descend to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people, and subversion of states and governments? Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and to set, out of the bark of a Christian Church, a flag of a bark of pirates and assassins. Therefore it is most necessary that the Church by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learnings, both Christian and moral, as by their

¹ So great the evils which religion could instigate!

² On St. Bartholomew's day, 1572. Bacon could remember the indignation it stirred in England.

mercury rod, do damn and send to hell for ever those facts¹ and opinions tending to the support of the same ; as hath been already in good part done. Surely in counsels concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle would² be prefixed, "*Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei.*"³ And it was a notable observation of a wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed, "that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends."

IV.—OF REVENGE.

(1625.)

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice, which the more a man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law ; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge a man is but even with his enemy ; but in passing it over he is superior : for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Solomon, I am sure, saith, "It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence."

¹ Deeds. Commonly used by Shakspeare of *evil* deeds. Thus, of the murder of Duncan : "Damned fact."

² Should. See note 1, Essay xxii. page 128.

³ The anger of man worketh not the justice of God (Vulgate).

That which is past is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come : therefore they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doeth a wrong for the wrong's sake ; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me ? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill-nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick or scratch, because they can do no other.

The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy ; but then let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish ; else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one.

Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh ; this is the more generous. For the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent. But base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark.

Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable : " You shall read," saith he, " that we are commanded to forgive our enemies ; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune : " Shall we," saith he,

"take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" And so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Cæsar, for the death of Pertinax, for the death of Henry III. of France, and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay, rather, vindictive persons live the life of witches, who, as they are mischievous, so end they infortunate.

V.—OF ADVERSITY.

(1625.)

It was a high speech of Seneca, after the manner of the Stoics, that the good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired. "*Bona rerum secundarum optabilia, adversarum mirabilia.*" Certainly if miracles be the command over Nature, they appear most in adversity. It is yet a higher speech of his than the other (much too high for a heathen), "It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man and the security of a God." "*Vere magnum, habere fragilitatem hominis, securitatem Dei.*" This would have done better in poesy, where transcendencies

are more allowed. And the poets, indeed, have been busy with it; for it is in effect the thing which is figured in that strange fiction of the ancient poets which seemeth not to be without mystery; nay, and to have some approach to the state of a Christian: that Hercules, when he went to unbind Prometheus (by whom human nature is represented), sailed the length of the great ocean in an earthen pot or pitcher; lively describing Christian resolution that saileth in the frail bark of the flesh through the waves of the world.

But to speak in a mean:¹ the virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroical virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer revelation of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needle-works and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground: judge,

¹ In a moderate fashion.

therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.¹

VI.—OF SIMULATION AND DIS-SIMULATION.

(1625.)

DISSIMULATION is but a faint kind of policy or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth and to do it. Therefore it is the weaker sort of politics² that are the great dissemblers.

Tacitus saith, "Livia sorted well with the arts

¹ John Webster's great play, "The White Devil," was printed thirteen years before this essay. It contains the following passage (i. 1):—

"Perfumes, the more they are chafed, the more they render
Their pleasing scents; and so affliction
Expresseth virtue fully, whether true
Or else adulterate."

Webster's "Duchess of Malfi," published two years before this essay, contains the same figure (iii. 5):—

"Man, like to cassia, is proved best being bruised."

Bacon (Apothegm 253) attributes the figure to another.
— See note, Essay xxxiv. page 183.

² Politicians.

of her husband and dissimulation of her son"; attributing arts or policy to Augustus and dissimulation to Tiberius. And, again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, "We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius." These properties of arts or policy, and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be distinguished. For if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights,¹ and to whom and when, (which, indeed, are arts of state and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them,) to him a habit of dissimulation is a hindrance and a poor-ness. But if a man cannot obtain to that judgment, then it is left to him, generally, to be close and a dissembler. For where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general; like the going softly by one that cannot well see. Certainly the ablest men that ever were have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity; but then they were like horses, well managed²; for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn. And at such times, when they thought the case indeed re-

¹ Compare the word "twilight."

² Trained, broken.

quired dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad of their good faith and clearness of dealing made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self. The first, closeness, reservation, and secrecy, when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken what he is. The second, dissimulation in the negative, when a man lets fall signs and arguments that he is not that he is. And the third, simulation in the affirmative, when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, secrecy : it is indeed the virtue of a confessor ; and assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions, for who will open himself to a blab or a babbler? But if a man be thought secret it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more open. And as in confession the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind ; while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides, to say truth, nakedness is uncomely as well in mind as body ; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly

vain and credulous withal. For he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down that an habit of secrecy is both politic and moral. And in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak. For the discovery of a man's self by the tracts¹ of his countenance is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

For the second, which is dissimulation, it followeth many times upon secrecy by necessity ; so that he that will be secret must be a dissembler in some degree. For men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent carriage between both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that, without an absurd silence, he must show an inclination one way ; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations or oraculous speeches, they cannot hold out long. So that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation, which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

But for the third degree, which is simulation and false profession : that I hold more culpable and less politic, except it be in great and rare matters.

¹ Traits.

And therefore a general custom of simulation, which is this last degree, is a vice rising either of a natural falseness or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults ; which, because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practise simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of ure.

The great advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three : — First, to lay asleep opposition and to surprise ; for where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum to call up all that are against them. The second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat ; for if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through or take a fall. The third is, the better to discover the mind of another ; for to him that opens himself, men will hardly show themselves adverse ; but will fair¹ let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And, therefore, it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, "Tell a lie, and find a truth ;" as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even : — The first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness, which in any business doth spoil the feathers of round² flying up to the mark. The second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many that perhaps

¹ Fairly, smoothly. They will "assent with civil leer."

² Flying *square* up.

would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends. The third and greatest is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action, which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is to have openness in fame and opinion, secrecy in habit, dissimulation in seasonable use, and a power to feign if there be no remedy.

VII. — OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

(1612 ; somewhat enlarged, 1625.)

THE joys of parents are secret, and so are their griefs and fears ; they cannot utter the one, nor they will not utter the other. Children sweeten labors, but they make misfortunes more bitter ; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts ; but memory, merit, and noble works are proper to men ; and surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, which have sought to express the images of their minds where those of their bodies have failed ; so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They that are the first raisers of their houses are most indulgent towards their children, beholding them as the continuance, not only of

their kind, but of their work ; and so both children and creatures.

The difference in affection of parents towards their several children is many times unequal, and sometimes unworthy, especially in the mother ; as Solomon saith, " A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother." A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected and the youngest made wantons ;¹ but in the midst some that are as it were forgotten, who many times, nevertheless, prove the best.

The illiberality of parents in allowance towards their children is an harmful error, — makes them base, acquaints them with shifts, makes them sort with mean company, and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty ; and therefore the proof is best when men keep their authority towards their children, but not their purse. Men have a foolish manner (both parents and school-masters and servants) in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers during childhood, which many times sorteth to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families.

The Italians make little difference between children and nephews or near kinsfolks ; but so they be of the lump, they care not though they pass not through their own body. And, to say truth,

¹ Spoiled by indulgence.

in nature it is much a like matter ; insomuch that we see a nephew sometimes resembleth an uncle or a kinsman more than his own parent, as the blood happens.

Let parents choose betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take, for then they are most flexible ; and let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most mind to. It is true that if the affection or aptness of the children be extraordinary, then it is good not to cross it ; but generally the precept is good, "*Optimum elige, suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo.*"¹ Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

VIII. — OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE.

(1612; enlarged, 1625.)

HE that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works and of greatest merit for the public have proceeded from the unmarried or childless

¹ Choose what is best : habit will make it pleasant and easy.

men, which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges.

Some there are who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences ; nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges ; nay more, there are some foolish, rich, covetous men that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer. For perhaps they have heard some talk, "Such an one is a great rich man," and another except to it, "Yea, but he hath a great charge of children," as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous¹ minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles.

Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants, but not always best subjects ; for they are light to run away, and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with Churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent² for judges and magistrates, for if they be

¹ Whimsical, crotchety.

² Immaterial.

facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly, in their hortatives, put men in mind of their wives and children. And I think the despising of marriage amongst the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base.

Certainly, wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hard-hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands; as was said of Ulysses, "*Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*"¹ Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds both of chastity and obedience in the wife, if she think her husband wise; which she will never do if she find him jealous.

Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses; so as a man may have a quarrel to marry when he will. But yet he was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question, when a man should marry; "A young man not yet, an elder man not at all."² It is often seen that bad husbands

¹ He preferred his old wife to immortality.

² Attributed to Thales.

have very good wives ; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husband's kindness when it comes, or that the wives take a pride in their patience. But this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing against their friends' consent ; for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

IX. — OF ENVY.

(1625.)

THERE be none of the affections which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy. They both have vehement wishes ; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions ; and they come easily into the eye, especially upon the presence of the objects ; which are the points that conduce to fascination, if any such thing there be. We see likewise the Scripture calleth envy an evil eye, and the astrologers call the evil influences of the stars evil aspects ; so that still there seemeth to be acknowledged in the act of envy an ejaculation,¹ or irradiation, of the eye. Nay, some have been so curious as to note that the times when the stroke or percussion of an envious eye doth most hurt, are when the party envied is beheld in glory or triumph, for that sets

¹ A darting forth.

an edge upon envy ; and, besides, at such times the spirits of the person envied do come forth most into the outward parts, and so meet the blow.

But leaving these curiosities, (though not unworthy to be thought on in fit place,¹) we will handle what persons are apt to envy others ; what persons are most subject to be envied themselves ; and what is the difference between public and private envy.

A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others. For men's minds will either feed upon their own good or upon others' evil ; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other ; and whoso is out of hope to attain to another's virtue will seek to come at even hand by depressing another's fortune.

A man that is busy and inquisitive is commonly envious. For to know much of other men's matters cannot be because all that ado may concern his own estate ; therefore it must needs be that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others. Neither can he that mindeth but his own business find much matter for envy, for envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the streets, and doth not keep home : " Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus." ²

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious

¹ In his " Natural History " Bacon had made the same observations about the evil eye.

² Every busybody is malevolent.

towards new men when they rise. For the distance is altered, and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on they think themselves go back.

Deformed persons, and eunuchs, and old men, and bastards, are envious; for he that cannot possibly mend his own case will do what he can to impair another's; except these defects light up-on a very brave and heroical nature, which thinketh to make his natural wants part of his honor; in that it should be said that an eunuch or a lame man did such great matters; affecting the honor of a miracle: as it was in Narses the eunuch, and Agesilaus and Tamberlanes, that were lame men.

The same is the case of men that rise after calamities and misfortunes; for they are as men fallen out with the times, and think other men's harms a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vain-glory, are ever envious; for they cannot want work, it being impossible but many in some one of those things should surpass them. Which was the character of Adrian, the emperor, that mortally envied poets and painters and artificers, in works wherein he had a vein to excel.

Lastly, near kinsfolks, and fellows in office, and those that have been bred together, are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised. For it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and

pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth¹ likewise more into the note of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel because, when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy: — First, persons of eminent virtue when they are advanced are less envied, for their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth the payment of a debt, but rewards and liberality rather. Again, envy is ever joined with the comparing of a man's self, and where there is no comparison, no envy; and therefore kings are not envied but by kings. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that unworthy persons are most envied at their first coming in, and afterwards overcome it better; whereas contrariwise, persons of worth and merit are most envied when their fortune continueth long. For by that time, though their virtue be the same, yet it hath not the same lustre, for fresh men grow up that darken it.

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising, for it seemeth but right done to their birth; besides, there seemeth not much added to their fortune, and envy is as the sunbeams, that beat

¹ Entereth.

hotter upon a bank or steep rising ground than upon a flat.¹ And for the same reason, those that are advanced by degrees are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly, and *per saltum*.²

Those that have joined with their honor great travels,³ cares, or perils are less subject to envy, for men think that they earn their honors hardly, and pity them sometimes; and pity ever healeth envy. Wherefore you shall observe that the more deep and sober sort of politic persons, in their greatness, are ever bemoaning themselves what a life they lead, chanting a "*Quanta patimur*;"⁴ not that they feel it so, but only to abate the edge of envy. But this is to be understood of business that is laid upon men, and not such as they call unto themselves. For nothing increaseth envy more than an unnecessary and ambitious engrossing of business; and nothing doth extinguish envy more than for a great person to preserve all other inferior officers in their full rights and pre-eminences of their places: for by that means there be so many screens between him and envy.

Above all, those are most subject to envy which carry the greatness of their fortunes in an insolent

¹ In the edition of 1612 this figure appears in the essay "Of Nobility."

² At a bound.

³ Travails, labors.

⁴ How much we suffer.

and proud manner, being never well but while they are showing how great they are, either by outward pomp, or by triumphing over all opposition or competition; whereas wise men will rather do sacrifice to envy, in suffering themselves sometimes of purpose to be crossed and overborne in things that do not much concern them. Notwithstanding, so much is true, that the carriage of greatness in a plain and open manner, so it be without arrogancy and vain-glory, doth draw less envy than if it be in a more crafty and cunning fashion. For in that course a man doth but disavow fortune, and seemeth to be conscious of his own want in worth, and doth but teach others to envy him.

Lastly, to conclude this part, as we said in the beginning that the act of envy had somewhat in it of witchcraft, so there is no other cure of envy but the cure of witchcraft; and that is to remove the lot,¹ as they call it, and to lay it upon another. For which purpose the wiser sort of great persons bring in ever upon the stage somebody upon whom to derive² the envy that would come upon themselves: sometimes upon ministers and servants, sometimes upon colleagues and associates, and the like; and for that turn there are never wanting some persons of violent and

¹ Spell. It seems to be a translation of the Latin *sors* (French *sort*), whence "sorcerer."

² Turn off.

undertaking natures, who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now to speak of public envy. There is yet some good in public envy, whereas in private there is none. For public envy is as an ostracism, that eclipseth men when they grow too great ; and therefore it is a bridle also to great ones, to keep them within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word *invidia*, goeth in the modern languages by the name of "discontentment," of which we shall speak in handling sedition. It is a disease in a state like to infection ; for as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it, so when envy is gotten once into a state, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odor. And therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible actions ; for that doth argue but a weakness and fear of envy, which hurteth so much the more ; as it is likewise usual in infections, which, if you fear them, you call them upon you.

This public envy seemeth to beat chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings and estates themselves. But this is a sure rule, that if the envy upon the minister be great when the cause of it in him is small, or if the envy be general in a manner upon all the ministers of an estate, then the envy, though hidden, is truly upon the state itself. And so much of public envy or discontentment, and the difference thereof

from private envy, which was handled in the first place.

We will add this in general, touching the affection of envy, that of all other affections it is the most importune and continual; for of other affections there is occasion given but now and then, and therefore it was well said, "*Invidia festos dies non agit*,"¹ for it is ever working upon some or other. And it is also noted that love and envy do make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual. It is also the vilest affection and the most depraved, for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called "the envious man, that soweth tares amongst the wheat by night;" as it always cometh to pass that envy worketh subtilly and in the dark, and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

X. — OF LOVE.

(1612; greatly enlarged, 1625)

THE stage is more beholding² to love than the life of man. For, as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a

¹ Envy keeps no holidays.

² Beholden. A common form of the word in the 17th century.

siren, sometimes like a fury. You may observe that amongst all the great and worthy persons whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent, there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love ; which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half-partner of the Empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the decemvir and law-giver ; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man and inordinate, but the latter was an austere and wise man ; and therefore it seems, though rarely, that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus : "*Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus,*"¹ as if man, made for the contemplation of Heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol and make himself subject, though not of the mouth, as beasts are, yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes.

It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things, by this, that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase ; for whereas it hath been well said that the arch-flatterer, with

¹ We are to one another a theater large enough.

whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self, certainly the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved ; and therefore it was well said "that it is impossible to love and to be wise." Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved : but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciproque. For it is a true rule that love is ever rewarded either with the reciproque or with an inward and secret contempt ; by how much the more men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them, that he that preferred Helena quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas ; for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection quitteth both riches and wisdom.

This passion hath his floods in the very times of weakness, which are great prosperity and great adversity, though this latter hath been less observed ; both which times kindle love and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter, and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life ; for if it check¹ once with business it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can no-

¹ Interfere.

ways be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love ; I think it is but as they are given to wine, for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures.

There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable, as it is seen sometime in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind, friendly love perfecteth it, but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

XI.—OF GREAT PLACE.

(1612 ; enlarged, 1625.)

MEN in great place are thrice servants : servants of the sovereign or state, servants of fame, and servants of business ; so as they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty ; or to seek power over others and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains ; and it is sometimes base, and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing.

"Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere."¹ Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason, but are impatient of privateness, even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly, great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions to think themselves happy, for if they judge by their own feeling they cannot find it; but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy as it were by report, when perhaps they find the contrary within. For they are the first that find their own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly, men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health either of body or mind. "*Illi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi.*"²

In place there is license to do good and evil, whereof the latter is a curse; for in evil the best condition is not to will, the second not to can. But power to do good is the true and lawful end

¹ When you are no longer what you were, you lose your interest in life.

² Death falls heavy upon him who dies well known to the world and a stranger to himself.

of aspiring. For good thoughts, though God accept them, yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act ; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion, and conscience of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest. For if a man can be partaker of God's theater, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. "*Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera, quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis,*"¹ and then the Sabbath.

In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples, for imitation is a globe of precepts. And after a time set before thee thine own example, and examine thyself strictly, whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not also the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place, not to set off thyself by taxing their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform, therefore, without bravery² or scandal of former times and persons ; but yet set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degenerate ; but yet ask counsel of both times : of the ancient time

¹ And God turned to behold all the works which his hands had wrought, and he saw that they were all very good.

² Ostentation.

what is best, and of the latter time what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory, and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the right of thy place, but stir not questions of jurisdiction; and rather assume thy right in silence and *de facto*, than voice it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places, and think it more honor to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place, and do not drive away such as bring thee information, as meddlers, but accept of them in good part.

The vices of authority are chiefly four: delays, corruption, roughness, and facility.¹ For delays: give easy access, keep times appointed, go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business but of necessity. For corruption: do not only bind thine own hands, or thy servants' hands, from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering. For integrity used doth the one; but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other. And avoid not only the fault but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable, and changeth manifestly without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption. Therefore

¹ Pliability, fickleness.

always when thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change, and do not think to steal it. A servant or a favorite, if he be inward,¹ and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close corruption. For roughness: it is a needless cause of discontent; severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility, it is worse than bribery. For bribes come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects lead a man, he shall never be without.² As Solomon saith: "To respect persons is not good; for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread."

It is most true that was anciently spoken, "A place showeth the man;" and it showeth some to the better and some to the worse. "Omnium consensu, capax imperii, nisi imperasset,"³ saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, "Solus imperantium Vespasianus mutatus in melius."⁴ Though the one was meant of sufficiency,⁵ the

¹ Intimate, confidential.

² "A judge were better be a briber than a respector of persons; for a corrupt judge offendeth not so lightly [readily] as a facile." *Advancement of Learning*, ii. 23. 6.

³ Everybody would have judged him worthy of the purple, if he had never worn it.

⁴ Vespasian was the one emperor who changed for the better.

⁵ Administrative capacity.

other of manners and affection. It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honor amends. For honor is, or should be, the place of virtue : and as in nature things move violently to their place, and calmly in their place ; so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm.

All rising to great place is by a winding stair, and, if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self ¹ whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly ; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them, and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors ; but let it rather be said, " When he sits in place he is another man."

XII. — OF BOLDNESS.

(1625.)

It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration. Question was asked of Demosthenes, What was the chief part of an orator ? He answered, Action. What next ?

¹ To take sides.

— Action. What next again? — Action. He said it that knew it best, and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature generally more of the fool than of the wise; and therefore those faculties by which the foolish part of men's minds is taken are most potent. Wonderful like is the case of boldness in civil business. What first? — Boldness. What second and third? — Boldness. And yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts. But, nevertheless, it doth fascinate and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part; yea, and prevaieth with wise men at weak times. Therefore, we see it hath done wonders in popular states, but with senates and princes less; and more ever upon the first entrance of bold persons into action than soon after; for boldness is an ill keeper of promise.

Surely, as there are mountebanks for the natural body, so are there mountebanks for the politic body; men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out. Nay, you shall see a bold fellow

many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call an hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled ; Mahomet called the hill to come to him, again and again ; and when the hill stood still he was never a whit abashed, but said, " If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill." So these men, when they have promised great matters, and failed most shamefully ; yet, if they have the perfection of boldness, they will but slight it over, and make a turn, and no more ado.

Certainly to men of great judgment bold persons are a sport to behold ; nay, and to the vulgar also boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous ; for if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity. Especially, it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as needs it must ; for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come ; but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay, like a stale at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir. But this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation.

This is well to be weighed, that boldness is ever blind : for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences. Therefore it is ill in counsel, good in execution ; so that the right use of bold persons is that they never

command in chief, but be seconds, and under the direction of others. For in counsel it is good to see dangers ; and in execution not to see them, except they be very great.

XIII. — OF GOODNESS, AND GOODNESS OF NATURE.

(1612 ; considerably enlarged, 1625.)

I TAKE goodness in this sense, the affecting of¹ the weal of men, which is that the Grecians call *philanthropia* ; and the word “humanity,” as it is used, is a little too light to express it. Goodness I call the habit, and goodness of nature the inclination. This of all virtues and dignities of the mind is the greatest, being the character of the Deity ; and without it man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin. Goodness answers to the theological virtue charity, and admits no excess, but error. The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall ; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall ; but in charity there is no excess, neither can angel or man come in danger by it. The inclination to goodness is imprinted deeply in the nature of man, insomuch that if it issue not towards men, it will take unto other living crea-

¹ Aiming at, seeking.

tures : as it is seen in the Turks, a cruel people, who nevertheless are kind to beasts, and give alms to dogs and birds ; insomuch, as Busbechius reporteth, a Christian boy in Constantinople had like to have been stoned for gagging, in a waggishness, a long-billed fowl.

Errors, indeed, in this virtue of goodness or charity may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb, "*Tanto buon che val niente*" : So good that he is good for nothing. And one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel, had the confidence to put in writing, almost in plain terms, "that the Christian faith had given up good men in prey to those that are tyrannical and unjust ;" which he spake because indeed there was never law, or sect, or opinion, did so much magnify goodness as the Christian religion doth. Therefore, to avoid the scandal and the danger both, it is good to take knowledge of the errors of an habit so excellent. Seek the good of other men, but be not in bondage to their faces or fancies ; for that is but facility¹ or softness, which taketh an honest mind prisoner. Neither give thou Æsop's cock a gem, who would be better pleased and happier if he had a barleycorn. The example of God teacheth the lesson truly : "He sendeth his rain, and maketh his sun to shine, upon the just and unjust ;" but he doth not rain

¹ Pliability. "As for facility, it is worse than bribery." Essay xi. page 78.

wealth, nor shine honor and virtues, upon men equally. Common benefits are to be communicate with all, but peculiar benefits with choice. And beware how in making the portraiture thou breakest the pattern ; for divinity maketh the love of ourselves the pattern, the love of our neighbors but the portraiture. "Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me." But sell not all thou hast except thou come and follow me ; that is, except thou have a vocation, wherein thou mayest do as much good with little means as with great ; for, otherwise, in feeding the streams thou driest the fountain.

Neither is there only a habit of goodness directed by right reason, but there is in some men, even in nature, a disposition towards it ; as on the other side there is a natural malignity. For there be that in their nature do not affect¹ the good of others. The lighter sort of malignity turneth but to a crossness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficileness, or the like ; but the deeper sort to envy and mere² mischief. Such men in other men's calamities are, as it were, in season, and are ever on the loading part³ ; not so good as the dogs that licked Laza-

¹ Seek, aim at.

² Sheer, absolute.

³ Adding their weight to the load. Abbott explains *loading* as a verbal noun used adjectively with *part*. Compare *walking-stick*, *church-going bell*. But it may be a misprint for *loaden*.

rus' sores, but like flies that are still buzzing upon anything that is raw: *misanthropi*, that make it their practice to bring men to the bough, and yet have never a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon had.¹ Such dispositions are the very errors of human nature, and yet they are the fittest timber to make great politics² of; like to knee-timber, that is good for ships that are ordained to be tossed, but not for building houses that shall stand firm.

The parts and signs of goodness are many. If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them. If he be compassionate towards the afflictions of others, it shows that his heart is like the noble tree that is wounded itself when it gives the balm. If he easily pardons and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be shot. If he be thankful for small benefits, it

¹ Timon's invitation to the Athenians is given as follows in North's Plutarch: "My lords of Athens, I have a little yard at my house where there groweth a fig-tree, on the which many citizens have hanged themselves: and because I mean to make some building on the place, I thought good to let you all understand it, that, before the fig-tree be cut down, if any of you be desperate, you may there in time go hang yourselves." Compare Shakspere's "Timon of Athens," v. i.

² Politicians. Compare *heretic*.

shows that he weighs men's minds, and not their trash.¹ But, above all, if he have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an anathema from Christ for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.²

XIV. — OF NOBILITY.

(1612 ; much enlarged and altered, 1625.)

WE will speak of nobility, first as a portion of an estate, then as a condition of particular persons. A monarchy where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny, as that of the Turks ; for nobility attempts sovereignty, and draws the eyes of the people somewhat aside from the line royal. But for democracies, they need it not ; and they are commonly more quiet, and less subject to sedition, than where there are stirrs³ of nobles ; for men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon the persons ; or if upon the persons, it is for the business' sake, as fittest, and not for flags and pedigree. We see the Switzers last well, notwithstanding their diversity of religion, and of cantons, for utility is

¹ Sometimes then used as a cant word for money :
"Who steals my purse, steals trash."

² This beautiful final paragraph was added in 1625.

³ Stems, families.

their bond, and not respects. The United Provinces of the Low Countries in their government excel ; for where there is an equality, the consultations are more indifferent,¹ and the payments and tributes more cheerful. A great and potent nobility addeth majesty to a monarch, but diminisheth power ; and putteth life and spirit into the people, but presseth their fortune. It is well when nobles are not too great for sovereignty nor for justice, and yet maintained in that height as the insolency of inferiors may be broken upon them, before it come on too fast upon the majesty of kings. A numerous nobility causeth poverty and inconvenience in a state, for it is a surcharge of expense ; and, besides, it being of necessity that many of the nobility fall in time to be weak in fortune, it maketh a kind of disproportion between honor and means.

As for nobility in particular persons, it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay, or to see a fair timber-tree sound and perfect ; how much more to behold an ancient and noble family which hath stood against the waves and weathers of time. For new nobility is but the act of power, but ancient nobility is the act of time. Those that are first raised to nobility are commonly more virtuous,² but less innocent, than their descendants, for there is rarely any rising but

¹ Impartial.

² Manly, able.

by a commixture of good and evil arts ; but it is reason the memory of their virtues remain to their posterity, and their faults die with themselves. Nobility of birth commonly abateth industry, and he that is not industrious envieth him that is. Besides noble persons cannot go much higher ; and he that standeth at a stay, when others rise, can hardly avoid motions of envy. On the other side, nobility extinguisheth the passive envy from others towards them, because they are in possession of honor.¹ Certainly, kings that have able men of their nobility shall find ease in employing them, and a better slide into their business² ; for people naturally bend to them, as born in some sort to command.

XV. — OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES.

(1625.³)

SHEPHERDS of people had need know the calendars of tempests in state, which are commonly greatest when things grow to equality ; as natural tempests are greatest about the *equinoctia*. And as there are certain hollow blasts of wind, and

¹ See the Essay "Of Envy," foot-note, page 70.

² Will find their business flow more smoothly (Latin translation).

³ Although this Essay does not appear in the edition of 1612, yet it is known to have been written, or rather sketched, before that date.

secret swellings of seas, before a tempest, so are there in states :

“ Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monit, fraudesque et operta tumescere bella.”¹

Libels and licentious discourses against the state, when they are frequent and open, and in like sort false news often running up and down to the disadvantage of the state, and hastily embraced, are amongst the signs of troubles. Virgil, giving the pedigree of Fame, saith she was sister to the giants :

“ Illam Terra parens, ira irritata Deorum,
Extremam, ut perhibent, Cæo Enceladoque sororem
Progeniuit.”²

As if fames were the relics of seditions past ; but they are no less indeed the preludes of seditions to come. Howsoever he noteth it right, that seditious tumults and seditious fames differ no more but as brother and sister, masculine and feminine ; especially if it come to that, that the best actions of a state, and the most plausible, and which ought to give greatest contentment, are taken in ill sense and traduced ; for that shows the envy great, as Tacitus saith, “ Conflata magna invidia,

¹ “ Of troubles imminent, and treasons dark,
Thence warning comes, and wars in secret gathering.”

VIRGIL (Spedding's trans.).

² “ Enraged against the Gods, revengeful Earth
Produced her, last of the Titanian birth.”

(Dryden's trans.)

seu bene, seu male, gesta premunt." ¹ Neither doth it follow that because these fumes are a sign of troubles, that the suppressing of them with too much severity should be a remedy of troubles. For the despising of them many times checks them best ; and the going about to stop them doth but make a wonder long-lived. Also that kind of obedience which Tacitus speaketh of is to be held suspected : " Erant in officio, sed tamen qui mallent mandata imperantium interpretari, quam exequi." ² Disputing, excusing, cavilling upon mandates and directions, is a kind of shaking off the yoke, and assay of disobedience ; especially if in those disputings they which are for the direction speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it audaciously.

Also, as Machiavel noteth well, when princes, that ought to be common parents, make themselves as a party and lean to a side, it is as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side ; as was well seen in the time of Henry III. of France : for first himself entered league for the extirpation of the Protestants, and presently after the same league was turned upon himself. For when the authority of princes is made but an ac-

¹ When envy is aroused, good and bad acts alike offend.

² They remained in their places, yet they preferred to quibble about the commands of their officers rather than to obey them.

cessary to a cause, and that there be other bands that tie faster than the band of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession.

Also, when discords, and quarrels, and factions, are carried openly and audaciously, it is a sign the reverence of government is lost. For the motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under *primum mobile*,¹ according to the old opinion, which is that every of them is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own motion. And therefore when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and, as Tacitus expresseth it well, "liberius, quam ut imperantium meminissent,"² it is a sign the orbs are out of frame. For reverence is that wherewith princes are girt from God, who threateneth the dissolving thereof: "Solvam cingula regum."³

So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken or weakened (which are religion, justice, counsel, and treasure), men had need to pray for fair weather. But let us pass from this part of predictions (concerning which, nevertheless, more light may be taken from that

¹ According to the old astronomers, the tenth or highest transparent, starless sphere, enclosing the solar system. Called by Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, the "Prime Orb."

² More freely than is consistent with their duty to the government.

³ I will loose the girdles of kings.

which followeth), and let us speak first of the materials of seditions ; then of the motives of them ; and thirdly of the remedies.

Concerning the materials of seditions, it is a thing well to be considered ; for the surest way to prevent seditions, if the times do bear it, is to take away the matter of them. For if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire. The matter of seditions is of two kinds : much poverty, and much discontentment. It is certain, so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles. Lucan noteth well the state of Rome before the civil war :

“ Hinc usura vorax, rapidumque in tempore fœnus,
Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum.”¹

This same “ multis utile bellum ” is an assured and infallible sign of a state disposed to seditions and troubles. And if this poverty and broken estate in the better sort be joined with a want and necessity in the mean people, the danger is imminent and great ; for the rebellions of the belly are the worst. As for discontentments, they are in the politic body like to humors in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat, and to inflame. And let no prince measure the danger of them by this, whether they be just or unjust, for that were

¹ Hence rapacious usury and greedy interest at the day of payment ; hence shaken credit, and war a gain to the many (*rapidum* should be *avidum*).

to imagine people to be too reasonable, who do often spurn at their own good ; nor yet by this, whether the griefs whereupon they rise be in fact great or small, for they are the most dangerous discontentments where the fear is greater than the feeling : “ *Dolendi modus, timendi non item.*”¹ Besides, in great oppressions, the same things that provoke the passions do withal mate the courage ; but in fears it is not so. Neither let any prince or state be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued ; for as it is true that every vapor or fume doth not turn into a storm, so it is nevertheless true that storms, though they blow over divers times, yet may fall at last ; and, as the Spanish proverb noteth well, “ The cord breaketh at the last by the weakest pull.”

The causes and motives of seditions are innovation in religion, taxes, alteration of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, dearths, disbanded soldiers, factions grown desperate ; and whatsoever in offending people joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.

For the remedies, there may be some general preservatives, whereof we will speak ; as for the just cure, it must answer to the particular disease, and so be left to counsel rather than rule.

¹ There is a limit to suffering, but not to fear.

The first remedy or prevention is to remove by all means possible that material cause of sedition whereof we spake, which is want and poverty in the estate. To which purpose serveth the opening and well-balancing of trade, the cherishing of manufactures, the banishing of idleness, the repressing of waste and excess by sumptuary laws, the improvement and husbanding of the soil, the regulating of prices of things vendible, the moderating of taxes and tributes, and the like. Generally it is to be foreseen that the population of a kingdom, especially if it be not mown down by wars, do not exceed the stock¹ of the kingdom which should maintain them. Neither is the population to be reckoned only by number; for a smaller number that spend more and earn less, do wear out an estate sooner than a greater number that live lower and gather more. Therefore, the multiplying of nobility and other degrees of quality, in an over proportion to the common people, doth speedily bring a state to necessity; and so doth likewise an overgrown clergy, for they bring nothing to the stock; and in like manner, when more are bred scholars than preferments can take off.

It is likewise to be remembered that, forasmuch as the increase of any estate must be upon the foreigner (for whatsoever is somewhere gotten is somewhere lost), there be but three things which

¹ Produce.

one nation selleth unto another : the commodity as nature yieldeth it, the manufacture, and the vecture or carriage. So that if these three wheels go, wealth will flow as in a spring tide. And it cometh many times to pass that "*materiam superabit opus*," that the work and carriage is more worth than the material, and enricheth a state more ; as is notably seen in the Low-Countrymen, who have the best mines above ground in the world.

Above all things good policy is to be used, that the treasure and moneys in a state be not gathered into few hands ; for otherwise a state may have a great stock, and yet starve. And money is like muck, not good except it be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or, at the least, keeping a strait hand upon the devouring trades of usury, engrossing, great pasturages, and the like.

For removing discontentments, or at least the danger of them, there is in every state, as we know, two portions of subjects, the noblesse and the commonalty. When one of these is discontent, the danger is not great ; for common people are of slow motion if they be not excited by the greater sort ; and the greater sort are of small strength, except the multitude be apt and ready to move of themselves. Then is the danger, when the greater sort do but wait for the troubling of the waters amongst the meaner, that then they may declare themselves. The poets feign that the rest of the

gods would have bound Jupiter ; which he hearing of, by the counsel of Pallas sent for Briareus with his hundred hands to come in to his aid. An emblem, no doubt, to show how safe it is for monarchs to make sure of the good-will of common people.

To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate, so it be without too great insolency or bravery,¹ is a safe way ; for he that turneth the humors back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious impostumations.

The part of Epimetheus mought well become Prometheus in the case of discontentments ; for there is not a better provision against them. Epimetheus, when griefs and evils flew abroad, at last shut the lid, and kept Hope in the bottom of the vessel. Certainly the politic and artificial nourishing and entertaining of hopes, and carrying men from hopes to hopes, is one of the best antidotes against the poison of discontentments. And it is a certain sign of a wise government and proceeding, when it can hold men's hearts by hopes, when it cannot by satisfaction ; and when it can handle things in such manner, as no evil shall appear so peremptory but that it hath some outlet of hope ; which is the less hard to do, because both particular persons and factions are apt enough to flatter

¹ Bravado.

themselves, or at least to brave¹ that which they believe not.

Also the foresight and prevention that there be no likely or fit head whereunto discontented persons may resort, and under whom they may join, is a known but an excellent point of caution. I understand a fit head to be one that hath greatness and reputation ; that hath confidence with the discontented party, and upon whom they turn their eyes ; and that is thought discontented in his own particular : which kind of persons are either to be won and reconciled to the state, and that in a fast and true manner ; or to be fronted with some other of the same party that may oppose them, and so divide the reputation. Generally, the dividing and breaking of all factions and combinations that are adverse to the state, and setting them at distance, or at least distrust, amongst themselves, is not one of the worst remedies. For it is a desperate case if those that hold with the proceedings of the state be full of discord and faction, and those that are against it be entire and united.

I have noted that some witty and sharp speeches which have fallen from princes have given fire to seditions. Cæsar did himself infinite hurt in that speech, "*Sylla nescivit literas, non potuit dictare ;*"² for it did utterly cut off that hope which

¹ Ostentatiously to assume or pretend, as in party platforms.

² Sylla did not know his letters, he could not dictate.

men had entertained, that he would at one time or other give over his dictatorship. Galba undid himself by that speech, "*Legi a se militem, non emi,*"¹ for it put the soldiers out of hope of the donative. Probus likewise by that speech, "*Si vixero, non opus erit amplius Romano imperio militibus,*"² a speech of great despair for the soldiers. And many the like. Surely, princes had need, in tender matters and ticklish times, to beware what they say; especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions. For as for large discourses, they are flat things, and not so much noted.

Lastly, let princes, against all events, not be without some great person, one, or rather more, of military valor near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings; for without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit. And the state runneth the danger of that which Tacitus saith: "*Atque is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur.*"³ But let such military per-

¹ That he did not buy his soldiers, but levied them.

² If I live, the Roman Empire shall have no further need of soldiers.

³ And such was the temper of their minds, that a few were in a mood to attempt mischief, more to desire it, and all to wink at it.

sons be assured and well reputed of, rather than factious and popular; holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the state; or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

XVI. — OF ATHEISM.

(1612; much enlarged, 1625.)

I HAD rather believe all the fables in the Legend,¹ and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind. And therefore God never wrought miracle to convince² atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes³ scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity. Nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion: that is, the school of Leucippus, and Democritus, and Epicurus. For it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements,

¹ The "Golden Legend" of the 13th century.

² Confute.

³ Efficient causes.

and one immutable fifth essence,¹ duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions or seeds, unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal.

The Scripture saith, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." It is not said, "The fool hath thought in his heart;" so as he rather saith it by rote to himself, as that he would have, than that he can thoroughly believe it, or be persuaded of it. For none deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there were no God. It appeareth in nothing more, that atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man than by this, that atheists will ever be talking of that their opinion, as if they fainted in it within themselves, and would be glad to be strengthened by the consent of others. Nay more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects; and, which is most of all, you shall have of them that will suffer for atheism, and not recant; whereas if they did truly think that there were no such thing as God, why should they trouble themselves? Epicurus is charged that he did but dissemble for his credit's sake, when he affirmed there were blessed natures, but such as enjoyed themselves without having respect to the government of the world. Wherein, they say, he did tem-

¹ The quintessence of which Aristotle supposed the heavenly bodies to be composed.

porize, though in secret he thought there was no God. But certainly he is traduced, for his words are noble and divine : " Non deos vulgi negare profanum ; sed vulgi opiniones diis applicare profanum." ¹ Plato could have said no more. And although he had the confidence to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature. The Indians of the West have names for their particular gods, though they have no name for God : as if the heathens should have had the names Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, &c., but not the word *Deus* ; which shows that even those barbarous people have the notion, though they have not the latitude and extent of it. So that against atheists the very savages take part with the very subtlest philosophers. The contemplative atheist is rare — a Diagoras, a Bion, a Lucian perhaps, and some others — and yet they seem to be more than they are, for that all that impugn a received religion, or superstition, are, by the adverse part, branded with the name of atheists. But the great atheists, indeed, are hypocrites, which are ever handling holy things, but without feeling ; so as they must needs be cauterized in the end.

The causes of atheism are : divisions in religion, if they be many, for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides, but many divisions introduce

¹ Profanity consists, not in denying the gods of the vulgar, but in adhering to vulgar beliefs concerning the gods.

atheism. Another is scandal of priests, when it is come to that which St. Bernard saith, "Non est jam dicere, ut populus, sic sacerdos : quia nec sic populus, ut sacerdos." ¹ A third is custom of profane scoffing in holy matters, which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion. And, lastly, learned times, specially with peace and prosperity ; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion.²

They that deny a God destroy man's nobility ; for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body, and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the raising of human nature. For take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man, who to him is instead of a God, or *melior natura* ;³ which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assur-eth himself upon divine protection and favor, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain. Therefore as atheism is in

¹ One can no longer say, the priest is as bad as the people, for now the people is not so bad as the priest.

² This paragraph, and the last sentence of the preceding, were originally in the essay "Of Superstition." In transferring them, Bacon, as his habit was, expanded them.

³ A better nature.

all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty. As it is in particular persons, so it is in nations. Never was there such a state for magnanimity as Rome; of this state hear what Cicero saith: "*Quam volumus licet, patres conscripti, nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis et terræ domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos; sed pietate, ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.*"¹

XVII. — OF SUPERSTITION.

(1612; considerably altered and enlarged, 1625.)

It were better to have no opinion of God at all than such an opinion as is unworthy of him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely. And cer-

¹ High as we may rate ourselves, Conscript Fathers, we cannot claim superiority to the Spaniards in number, to the Gauls in bodily strength, to the Carthaginians in craft, to the Greeks in art, nor yet to our own Italians and Latins in the homely and inbred sense peculiar to this land and race; but we have surpassed all tribes and nations in piety, in religion, and in our acknowledgment of the one great truth that all things are subject to the sway of the Immortal Gods.

tainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: "Surely," saith he, "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born," as the poets speak of Saturn. And as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not. But superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. Therefore atheism did never perturb states, for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further. And we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times. But superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile*¹ that ravisheth² all the spheres of government.

The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools, and arguments are fitted to practise in a reversed order. It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bore great sway, "that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such engines of orbs, to save the

¹ Prime Orb. See note 1, Essay xv. page 93.

² Whirls away.

phenomena, though they knew there were no such things ;”¹ and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtile and intricate axioms and theorems to save the practice of the Church.

The causes of superstition are : pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies ; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness ; over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church ; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre ; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties ; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations ; and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters.²

Superstition without a veil is a deformed thing ; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed. And as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms

¹ Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, viii. : —

“ How they will wield
The mighty frame ; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances ; how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbled o’er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.”

² In the paragraph transferred in 1625 to the essay “Of Atheism,” the causes of atheism were here set over against the causes of superstition.

and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances.

There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received. Therefore care would be had that, as it fareth in ill purgings, the good be not taken away with the bad ; which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.¹

XVIII. — OF TRAVEL.

(1625.)

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education ; in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well ; so that he be such a one that hath the language and hath been in the country before, whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little.

It is a strange thing that in sea voyages, where

¹ This last paragraph is one of the additions of 1625. It indicates Bacon's growing distrust of the Puritans.

there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries ; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it ; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries therefore be brought in use.

The things to be seen and observed are : the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors ; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes ; and so of consistories ecclesiastic ; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant ; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbors ; antiquities and ruins ; libraries, colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are ; shipping and navies ; houses and gardens of state and pleasure near great cities ; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, burses, warehouses ; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like ; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort ; treasuries of jewels and robes, cabinets and rarities ; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go : after all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masques, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them ; yet are they not to be neglected.

If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much,

this you must do : first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant or tutor as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card¹ or book describing the country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long in one city or town ; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long. Nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant² of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth. Let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors ; for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds which are of great name abroad, that he may be

¹ A form of the word *chart*.

² Lodestone.

able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with cholerick and quarrelsome persons, for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture ; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers than forwards to tell stories. And let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts, but only prick in ¹ some flowers of that he hath learned abroad, into the customs of his own country.

XIX. — OF EMPIRE.

(1612; altered and much enlarged, 1625)

It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire, and many things to fear ; and yet that commonly is the case of kings, who, being at the highest, want matter of desire, which makes their minds more languishing ; and have

¹ Plant.

many representations of perils and shadows, which makes their minds the less clear. And this is one reason also of that effect which the Scripture speaketh of, "that the king's heart is inscrutable." For multitude of jealousies, and lack of some predominant desire that should marshal and put in order all the rest, maketh any man's heart hard to find or sound. Hence it comes, likewise, that princes many times make themselves desires, and set their hearts upon toys : sometimes upon a building, sometimes upon erecting of an order, sometimes upon the advancing of a person, sometimes upon obtaining excellency in some art or feat of the hand, — as Nero for playing on the harp, Domitian for certainty of the hand with the arrow, Commodus for playing at fence, Caracalla for driving chariots, and the like. This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things, than by standing at a stay in great. We see also that kings that have been fortunate conquerors in their first years, it being not possible for them to go forward infinitely, but that they must have some check or arrest in their fortunes, turn in their latter years to be superstitious and melancholy ; as did Alexander the Great, Diocletian, and in our memory Charles V., and others ; for he that is used to go forward, and findeth a stop, falleth out of his own favor, and is not the thing he was.

To speak now of the true temper of empire, it is a thing rare and hard to keep; for both temper and distemper consist of contraries. But it is one thing to mingle contraries, another to interchange them. The answer of Apollonius to Vespasian is full of excellent instruction. Vespasian asked him, "What was Nero's overthrow?" He answered, "Nero could touch and tune the harp well; but in government sometimes he used to wind the pins too high, sometimes to let them down too low." And certain it is, that nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power pressed too far, and relaxed too much.

This is true, that the wisdom of all these latter times, in princes' affairs, is rather fine deliveries,¹ and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof. But this is but to try masteries with fortune. And let men beware how they neglect and suffer matter of trouble to be prepared, for no man can forbid the spark, nor tell whence it may come. The difficulties in princes' business are many and great; but the greatest difficulty is often in their own mind. For it is common with princes, saith Tacitus, to will contradictories. "*Sunt plerumque regum voluntates vehementes, et inter se contrariæ.*"² For it is the solecism of

¹ Deliverances, means of escape.

² As a rule, the desires of kings are violent and inconsistent.

power to think to command the end, and yet not to endure the mean.

Kings have to deal with their neighbors, their wives, their children, their prelates or clergy, their nobles, their second nobles or gentlemen, their merchants, their commons, and their men of war ; and from all these arise dangers, if care and circumspection be not used.

First for their neighbors, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable), save one, which ever holdeth : which is, that princes do keep due sentinel that none of their neighbors do overgrow so, by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like, as they become more able to annoy them than they were. And this is generally the work of standing councils, to foresee and to hinder it. During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry VIII. of England, Francis I., King of France, and Charles V., Emperor, there was such a watch kept that none of the three could win a palm of ground, but the other two would straightways balance it, either by confederation, or if need were by a war, and would not in any wise take up peace at interest. And the like was done by that league, which, Guicciardine saith, was the security of Italy, made between Ferdinando King of Naples, Lorenzious Medices, and Ludovicus Sforza, potentates, the one of Florence, the other of Milan. Neither is the opinion of some of the schoolmen to be

received, that a war cannot justly be made but upon a precedent injury or provocation : for there is no question but a just fear of an imminent danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of a war.

For their wives, there are cruel examples of them. Livia is infamed for the poisoning of her husband ; Roxolana, Solyman's wife, was the destruction of that renowned prince, Sultan Mustapha, and otherwise troubled his house and succession ; Edward II. of England his queen had the principal hand in the deposing and murder of her husband. This kind of danger is then to be feared chiefly, when the wives have plots for the raising of their own children ; or else that they be advoutresses.¹

For their children, the tragedies likewise of dangers from them have been many ; and generally, the entering of fathers into suspicion of their children hath been ever unfortunate. The destruction of Mustapha, that we named before, was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks, from Solyman until this day, is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood ; for that Selymus II. was thought to be supposititious. The destruction of Crispus, a young prince of rare towardness, by Constantinus the Great, his father, was in like manner fatal to his house ; for both Constantinus

¹ Adulteresses.

and Constans, his sons, died violent deaths ; and Constantius, his other son, did little better, who died indeed of sickness, but after that Julianus had taken arms against him. The destruction of Demetrius, son to Philip II. of Macedon, turned upon the father, who died of repentance. And many like examples there are ; but few or none where the fathers had good by such distrust, except it were where the sons were up in open arms against them ; as was Selymus I. against Bajazet, and the three sons of Henry II., King of England.

For their prelates, when they are proud and great, there is also danger from them, as it was in the times of Anselmus and Thomas Becket, Archbishops of Canterbury, who with their crosiers did almost try it with the king's sword ; and yet they had to deal with stout and haughty kings, William Rufus, Henry I., and Henry II. The danger is not from that state, but where it hath a dependence of foreign authority ; or where the Churchmen come in, and are elected, not by the collation of the king or particular patrons, but by the people.

For their nobles, to keep them at a distance it is not amiss ; but to depress them may make a king more absolute, but less safe, and less able to perform anything that he desires. I have noted it in my "History of King Henry VII. of England," who depressed his nobility ; where-

upon it came to pass that his times were full of difficulties and troubles, for the nobility, though they continued loyal unto him, yet did they not co-operate with him in his business. So that in effect he was fain to do all things himself.

For their second nobles, there is not much danger from them, being a body dispersed. They may sometimes discourse high, but that doth little hurt; besides they are a counterpoise to the higher nobility, that they grow not too potent; and lastly, being the most immediate in authority with the common people, they do best temper popular commotions.

For their merchants, they are *vena porta*; ¹ and if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and nourish little. Taxes and imposts upon them do seldom good to the king's revenue, for that that he wins in the hundred he leaseth in the shire; the particular rates being increased, but the total bulk of trading rather decreased.

For their commons, there is little danger from them, except it be where they have great and potent heads; or where you meddle with the point of religion, or their customs, or means of life.

For their men of war, it is a dangerous state

¹ The gate-vein: then supposed to be the avenue of distribution of the chyle to the liver. Bacon seems never to have accepted Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood.

where they live and remain in a body, and are used to donatives ; whereof we see examples in the janizaries, and pretorian bands of Rome ; but trainings of men, and arming them in several places and under several commanders, and without donatives, are things of defence and no danger.

Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times, and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances : " Memento quod es homo," and " Memento quod es Deus," or " vice Dei ;"¹ the one bridled their power, and the other their will.

XX. — OF COUNSEL.

(1612 ; considerably enlarged, 1625.)

THE greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel. For in other confidences, men commit the parts of life ; their lands, their goods, their children, their credit, some particular affair ; but to such as they make their counsellors, they commit the whole : by how much the more they are obliged to all faith and

¹ Remember that you are a man ; and remember that you are a god, or God's vicegerent.

integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness, or derogation to their sufficiency, to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son, "the Counselor." Solomon hath pronounced that "in counsel is stability." Things will have their first or second agitation; if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon the waves of fortune, and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing, like the reeling of a drunken man. Solomon's son found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it. For the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel; upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is for ever best discerned: that it was young counsel for the persons; and violent counsel for the matter.

The ancient times do set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with kings, and the wise and politic use of counsel by kings; the one, in that they say Jupiter did marry Metis, which signifieth counsel, whereby they intend that sovereignty is married to counsel; the other in that which followeth, which was thus: they say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child, but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but ate her up; whereby he became

himself with child, and was delivered of Pallas armed, out of his head. Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire, how kings are to make use of their council of state. That, first, they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation; but when they are elaborate, moulded and shaped in the womb of their council, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their council to go through with the resolution and direction, as if it depended on them; but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed), proceeded from themselves, and not only from their authority, but, the more to add reputation to themselves, from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel are three: first, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret; secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves; thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel than of him that is counselled. For which inconveniences the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some

kings' times, hath introduced cabinet councils, — a remedy worse than the disease.¹

As to secrecy, princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select. Neither is it necessary that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do. But let princes beware that the unsecreting of their affairs comes not from themselves. And as for cabinet councils, it may be their motto: "*Plenus rimarum sum*;"² one futile person, that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many that know it their duty to conceal. It is true, there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king: neither are those counsels unprosperous; for, besides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction, without distraction. But then it must be a prudent king, such as is able to grind with a hand-mill; and those

¹ There can be no question here of the modern Cabinet, which did not yet exist. What is meant is clearly shown by the following bit of context in a MS. copy of the Essays preserved in the British Museum (date, 1607-1612). After the word "disease" read: "which hath tourned *Metis* the wife, to *Metis* the mistresse, that is the councelles of State to which Princes are marryed, to councells of gracious persons recommended cheifly by flattery and affection." This Bacon prudently suppressed, possibly out of consideration for Buckingham.

² I am full of chinks.

inward counsellors had need also be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends ; as it was with King Henry VII. of England, who in his greatest business imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton and Fox.

For weakening of authority, the fable showeth the remedy. Nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished, when they are in the chair of counsel ; neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependencies by his counsel, except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor, or an over-strict combination in divers ; which are things soon found and holpen.

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves, certainly "*Non inveniet fidem super terram*"¹ is meant of the nature of times, and not of all particular persons. There be that are in nature faithful and sincere, and plain and direct, not crafty and involved ; let princes above all draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another ; so that if any do counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the king's ear. But the best remedy is, if princes know their counsellors, as well as their counsellors know them :

"*Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos.*"²

¹ He shall not find faith on earth.

² It is the chief virtue of a ruler to know his subjects.

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is rather to be skilful in their master's business than in his nature ; for then he is like to advise him, and not to feed his humor. It is of singular use to princes if they take the opinions of their counsel both separately and together ; for private opinion is more free, but opinion before others is more reverend. In private, men are more bold in their own humors, and in consort, men are more obnoxious¹ to others' humors ; therefore it is good to take both : and of the inferior sort, rather in private, to preserve freedom ; of the greater, rather in consort, to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel concerning matters, if they take no counsel likewise concerning persons ; for all matters are as dead images, and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons. Neither is it enough to consult concerning persons *secundum genera*,² as in an idea or mathematical description, what the kind and character of the person should be ; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgment is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, "Optimi consilarii mortui ;"³ books will speak plain when counsel-

¹ Exposed ; hence, submissive.

² By classes.

³ The best counsellors are the dead.

lors blanch.¹ Therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been actors upon the stage.

The councils at this day, in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated; and they run too swift to the order or act of council. It were better that, in causes of weight, the matter were propounded one day and not spoken to till the next day; "in nocte consilium."² So was it done in the commission of union between England and Scotland, which was a grave and orderly assembly.³ I commend set days for petitions, for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate, that they may *hoc agere*.⁴ In choice of committees, for ripening business for the council, it is better to choose indifferent⁵ persons, than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend also standing commissions,⁶ as for trade, for treasure, for war, for suits, for some provinces; for where there be divers particular councils, and but one council of estate (as it is in

¹ Shirk, blink. "In annotations . . . it is over usual to blanch the obscure places, and discourse upon the plain." (Adv. of Learning.)

² There's counsel in a night.

³ In which Bacon played a leading part.

⁴ Attend to business.

⁵ Neutral.

⁶ Compare page 114: "standing councils."

Spain), they are, in effect, no more than standing commissions, save that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform councils out of their particular professions (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen, and the like), be first heard before committees, and then, as occasion serves, before the council. And let them not come in multitudes or in a tribunitious manner; for that is to clamor councils, not to inform them. A long table and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things of form, but are things of substance: for at a long table a few at the upper end, in effect, sway all the business; but in the other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in council, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him, and instead of giving free counsel, sing him a song of *placebo*.¹

XXI. — OF DELAYS.

(1625.)

FORTUNE is like the market, where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall. And again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's offer, which

¹ I shall please. Properly the vesper hymn for the dead: "I will please the Lord in the land of the living."

at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price. For "occasion (as it is in the common verse) turneth a bald noddle, after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken;" or at least turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly, which is hard to clasp. There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light if they once seem light, and more dangers have deceived men than forced them. Nay, it were better to meet some dangers half-way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low and shone on their enemies' back), and so to shoot off before the time; or to teach dangers to come on, by over-early buckling towards them, is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion, as we said, must ever be well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argus with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands, — first to watch and then to speed. For the helmet of Pluto, which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the counsel and celerity in the execution. For when things are once come to the

execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity; like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the eye.

XXII.—OF CUNNING.

(1612; enlarged almost five-fold, 1625.)

WE take cunning for a sinister or crooked wisdom. And certainly there is great difference between a cunning man and a wise man, not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability. There be that can pack the cards and yet cannot play well; so there are some that are good in canvasses and factions, that are otherwise weak men. Again, it is one thing to understand persons and another thing to understand matters; for many are perfect in men's humors that are not greatly capable of the real part of business; which is the constitution of one that hath studied men more than books. Such men are fitter for practice than for counsel, and they are good but in their own alley; turn them to new men and they have lost their aim; so as the old rule to know a fool from a wise man, "*Mitte ambos nudos ad ignotos, et videbis,*"¹ doth scarce hold for them. And because these cunning men are like haberdashers of

¹ Turn them both naked among strangers, and you will see.

small wares, it is not amiss to set forth their shop.

It is a point of cunning to wait upon him with whom you speak with your eye, as the Jesuits give it in precept; for there be many wise men that have secret hearts and transparent countenances. Yet this would¹ be done with a demure abashing of your eye sometimes, as the Jesuits also do use.

Another is, that when you have anything to obtain of present dispatch, you entertain and amuse the party with whom you deal with some other discourse, that he be not too much awake to make objections. I knew a councillor and secretary² that never came to Queen Elizabeth of England with bills to sign, but he would always first put her into some discourse of estate, that she mought the less mind the bills.

The like surprise may be made by moving things when the party is in haste, and cannot stay to consider advisedly of that is moved.

If a man would cross a business that he doubts³ some other would handsomely and effectually move, let him pretend to wish it well, and move it himself in such sort as may foil it.

The breaking off in the midst of that one was

¹ Requires to. Compare "Hamlet," iii. 3. "That would be scanned."

² Perhaps Walsingham, or Cecil.

³ Suspects, or fears.

about to say, as if he took himself up, breeds a greater appetite in him with whom you confer, to know more.

And because it works better when anything seemeth to be gotten from you by question than if you offer it of yourself, you may lay a bait for a question by showing another visage and countenance than you are wont, to the end to give occasion for the party to ask what the matter is of the change ; as Nehemiah did, " And I had not before that time been sad before the king."

In things that are tender and unpleasing it is good to break the ice by some whose words are of less weight, and to reserve the more weighty voice to come in as by chance, so that he may be asked the question upon the other's speech ; as Narcissus did, in relating to Claudius the marriage of Messalina and Silius.

In things that a man would not be seen in himself, it is a point of cunning to borrow the name of the world ; as to say, " The world says," or, " There is a speech abroad."

I knew one that, when he wrote a letter, he would put that which was most material in the postscript, as if it had been a bye-matter.

I knew another that, when he came to have speech, he would pass over that that he intended most, and go forth and come back again, and speak of it as of a thing that he had almost forgot.

Some procure themselves to be surprised at such

times as it is like the party that they work upon will suddenly come upon them ; and to be found with a letter in their hand, or doing somewhat which they are not accustomed, to the end they may be apposed¹ of those things which of themselves they are desirous to utter.

It is a point of cunning to let fall those words in a man's own name, which he would have another man learn and use, and thereupon take advantage. I knew two that were competitors for the secretary's place in Queen Elizabeth's time, and yet kept good quarter between themselves, and would confer one with another upon the business ; and the one of them said that to be a secretary in the declination of a monarchy was a ticklish thing, and that he did not affect it ; the other straight caught up those words, and discoursed with divers of his friends that he had no reason to desire to be secretary in the declination of a monarchy. The first man took hold of it, and found means it was told the Queen, who, hearing of a declination of a monarchy, took it so ill as she would never after hear of the other's suit.²

There is a cunning which we in England call, "The turning of the cat³ in the pan ;" which is,

¹ Questioned. See note 1, Essay xxxii. page 175.

² These worthies are supposed to be Sir Thomas Bodley and Bacon's kinsman and prosperous rival, Sir Robert Cecil.

³ Originally *cate* (cake).

when that which a man saith to another, he lays it as if another had said it to him. And to say truth it is not easy, when such a matter passed between two, to make it appear from which of them it first moved and began.

It is a way that some men have to glance and dart at others, by justifying themselves by negatives ; as to say, " This I do not," as Tigellinus did towards Burrhus : " *Se non diversas spes, sed incolumitatem imperatoris simpliciter spectare.*"¹

Some have in readiness so many tales and stories as there is nothing they would insinuate but they can wrap it into a tale ; which serveth both to keep themselves more in guard, and to make others carry it with more pleasure.

It is a good point in cunning for a man to shape the answer he would have in his own words and propositions, for it makes the other party stick the less.

It is strange how long some men will lie in wait to speak somewhat they desire to say ; and how far about they will fetch, and how many other matters they will beat over, to come near it. It is a thing of great patience, but yet of much use.

A sudden, bold, and unexpected question doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open. Like to him that, having changed his name, and

¹ He entertained not various hopes, but simply looked to the emperor's safety.

walking in Paul's,¹ another suddenly came behind him and called him by his true name, whereat straightways he looked back.

But these small wares and petty points of cunning are infinite, and it were a good deed to make a list of them ; for that nothing doth more hurt in a state than that cunning men pass for wise.

But certainly some there are that know the resorts and falls of business, that cannot sink into the main² of it ; like a house that hath convenient stairs and entries, but never a fair room. Therefore you shall see them find out pretty looses³ in the conclusion, but are no ways able to examine or debate matters. And yet commonly they take advantage of their inability, and would be thought wits of direction. Some build rather upon the abusing of others, and, as we now say, putting tricks upon them, than upon soundness of their

¹ The body of old St. Paul's church was a sort of cockney Rialto.

² Wright and Abbott think *main* here means *the sea*, metaphorically contrasted with *resorts* (springs) and *falls*. It does not appear that *resort* (French *ressort*) is elsewhere used for *fountain*. But Bacon, like Shakspeare, was fond of playing with his words. Compare "Merchant of Venice," v. 1.

"Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters."

³ Solutions. Perhaps the same as *deliveries*, note 1, Essay xix. page 113.

own proceedings. But Solomon saith, "*Prudens advertit ad gressus suos: stultus divertit ad dolos.*"¹

XXIII.—OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF.

(1612; enlarged, 1625.)

AN ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd² thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society, and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others, especially to thy king and country.³ It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth. For that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another, which they benefit.⁴

The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince, because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a

¹ The prudent man looks to his steps; the fool turns aside to the snare.

² Mischievous.

³ Compare "*Hamlet*," i. 3.

"This above all: to thine own self be true," etc.

⁴ Bacon did not accept the Copernican theory.

republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends, which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state. Therefore let princes or states choose such servants as have not this mark, except they mean their service should be made but the accessory.

That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's ; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants ; which set a bias¹ upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune, but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set an house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs ; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them, and profit themselves ; and for either respect they will abandon the good of their affairs.

¹ A load of lead inserted in the bowl, to cause an oblique motion, or bias.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which, as Cicero says of Pompey, are "*sui amantes sine rivali*,"¹ are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their time sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

XXIV. — OF INNOVATIONS.

(1625.)

As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of time. Yet, notwithstanding, as those that first bring honor into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed, so the first precedent, if it be good, is seldom attained by imitation. For ill, to man's nature as it stands perverted, hath a natural motion strongest in continuance; but good, as a forced motion, strongest at first. Surely

¹ Self-lovers without a rival.

every medicine is an innovation, and he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils. For time is the greatest innovator; and if time of course¹ alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?

It is true that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit. And those things which have long gone together are, as it were, confederate within themselves; whereas new things piece not so well, but though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity. Besides, they are like strangers, more admired and less favored. All this is true if time stood still, which contrariwise moveth so round that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new.

It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived. For otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for, and ever it mends some and pairs² others; and he that is holpen takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author.

It is good also not to try experiments in states,

¹ In its course.

² Impairs.

except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident ; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation. And lastly, that the novelty, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect ;¹ and, as the Scripture saith, "that we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us and discover what is the straight and right way, and so to walk in it."

XXV.—OF DISPATCH.

(1612 ; slightly altered and enlarged, 1625.)

AFFECTED dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be. It is like that which the physicians call predigestion, or hasty digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities and secret seeds of diseases. Therefore measure not dispatch by the times of sitting, but by the advancement of the business. And as in races it is not the large stride, or high lift, that makes the speed, so in business, the keeping close to the matter, and not taking of it too much at once, procureth dispatch. It is the care of some only to come off speedily for the time ; or to contrive some false periods of business, because

¹ Suspected thing. Shakspeare uses it for suspicion :

"The ornament of beauty is suspect."

they may seem men of dispatch. But it is one thing to abbreviate by contracting, another by cutting off; and business so handled at several sittings or meetings goeth commonly backward and forward in an unsteady manner. I knew a wise man¹ that had it for a byword, when he saw men hasten to a conclusion, "Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner."

On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing. For time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch. The Spartans and Spaniards have been noted to be of small dispatch: "Mi venga la muerte de Spagna," let my death come from Spain; for then it will be sure to be long in coming.

Give good hearing to those that give the first information in business, and rather direct them in the beginning than interrupt them in the continuance of their speeches; for he that is put out of his own order will go forward and backward, and be more tedious, while he waits upon his memory, than he could have been if he had gone on in his own course. But sometimes it is seen that the moderator is more troublesome than the actor.

Iterations are commonly loss of time; but there

¹ Sir Amias Paulet (*Apophthegm* 76). But Lloyd, in his "*State Worthies*," attributes the saying to Bacon's father.

is no such gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question, for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech as it is coming forth. Long and curious¹ speeches are as fit for dispatch as a robe or mantle with a long train is for race. Prefaces, and passages, and excusations, and other speeches of reference to the person, are great wastes of time ; and though they seem to proceed of modesty, they are bravery.² Yet beware of being too material³ when there is any impediment or obstruction in men's wills ; for preoccupation of mind ever requireth preface of speech, like a fomentation to make the unguent enter.

Above all things, order, and distribution, and singling out of parts, is the life of dispatch, so as the distribution be not too subtile ; for he that doth not divide will never enter well into business, and he that divideth too much will never come out of it clearly. To choose time is to save time, and an unseasonable motion is but beating the air. There be three parts of business : the preparation, the debate or examination, and the perfection. Whereof, if you look for dispatch, let the middle only be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. The proceeding upon somewhat conceived in writing doth for the most part facili-

¹ Elaborate.

² Ostentation.

³ Beware of coming to the point at the outset (Latin translation).

foretell difficulties. For when propositions are denied, there is an end of them ; but if they be allowed, it requireth a new work : which false point of wisdom is the bane of business. To conclude, there is no decaying merchant, or inward beggar, hath so many tricks to uphold the credit of their wealth, as these empty persons have to maintain the credit of their sufficiency. Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion, but let no man choose them for employment : for certainly you were better take for business a man somewhat absurd than over-formal.

XXVII. — OF FRIENDSHIP.

(1625.¹)

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a God." For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversation towards society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast ; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in

¹ There was an essay "Of Friendship" in the edition of 1612, but it was hardly more than the germ of the present one, which is about nine times as long.

solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation : such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen, as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana ; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth ; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, "*Magna civitas, magna solitudo* ;" ¹ because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere ² and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness. And even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body, and it is not

¹ A great town is a great solitude.

² Utter. "The mere [sheer] destruction of the Turkish fleet." — Othello.

much otherwise in the mind ; you may take sarza¹ to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flour of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain, but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak ; so great as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit except, to make themselves capable thereof, they raise some persons to be, as it were, companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites or privadoes, as if it were matter of grace or conversation ; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them "*participes curarum*,"² for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned ; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends,

¹ Sarsaparilla.

² Partners in cares.

and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey, after surnamed the Great, to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet, "for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting." With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and especially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favor was so great as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philipics, calleth him "venefica," witch, as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa, though of mean birth, to that height as, when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took

the liberty to tell him, "That he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa or take away his life ; there was no third way, he had made him so great." With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith : "*Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi ;*"¹ and the whole senate dedicated an altar to friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus, and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son ; and did write also in a letter to the senate by these words : "I love the man so well as I wish he may over-live me." Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature ; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity, though as great as ever happened to mortal men, but as a half-piece, except they mought have a friend to make it entire. And yet, which is more, they were princes which had wives, sons, nephews ;

¹ On account of our friendship I have not kept these things back.

and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Commineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy ; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none, and least of all those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith that towards his latter time "that closeness did impair, and a little perish his understanding." Surely Commineus mought have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis XI., whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark but true : "*Cor ne edito,*" eat not the heart. Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first-fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects : for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more ; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchemists used to attribute to their stone for man's body, that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying

in aid of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression: and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another: he tosseth his thoughts more easily, he marshalleth them more orderly, he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself, and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, "That speech' was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad, whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs." Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man

counsel ; they indeed are best, but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statua or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation : which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best." And certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment, which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self ; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts : the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometime too piercing and corrosive.

Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many, especially of the greater sort, do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them ; to the great damage both of their fame and fortune. For, as St. James saith, they are as men "that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor." As for business, a man may think if he will that two eyes see no more than one ; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on ; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters ; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest ; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces ; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man ; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all), but he runneth two dangers. One, that he shall not be faithfully counselled : for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends

which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe, though with good meaning, and mixt partly of mischief and partly of remedy. Even as if you would call a physician that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware by furthering any present business how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And, therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment) followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels: I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here, the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, "That a friend is another himself;" for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart, — the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend,

he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place ; but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy, for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself ! A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them ; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg ; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper ¹ relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son, but as a father ; to his wife but as a husband ; to his enemy but upon terms ; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless. I have given the rule where a man cannot fitly play his own part : if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

¹ Personal, peculiar.

XXVIII. — OF EXPENSE.

(1597; somewhat enlarged, 1612; and again, 1625.)

RICHES are for spending, and spending for honor and good actions. Therefore extraordinary expense must be limited by the worth of the occasion; for voluntary undoing¹ may be as well for a man's country as for the kingdom of heaven. But ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate, and governed with such regard as it be within his compass, and not subject to deceit and abuse of servants, and ordered to the best show, that the bills may be less than the estimation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep but of even hand, his ordinary expenses ought to be but to the half of his receipts; and if he think to wax rich, but to the third part.

It is no baseness for the greatest to descend and look into their own estate. Some forbear it, not upon negligence alone, but doubting² to bring themselves into melancholy, in respect they shall find it broken. But wounds cannot be cured without searching. He that cannot look into his own estate at all had need both choose well those whom he employeth, and change them often; for

¹ Poverty (Latin translation).

² Fearing.

new are more timorous and less subtle. He that can look into his estate but seldom, it behoveth him to turn all to certainties.¹

A man had need, if he be plentiful in some kind of expense, to be as saving again in some other : as if he be plentiful in diet, to be saving in apparel ; if he be plentiful in the hall, to be saving in the stable ; and the like. For he that is plentiful in expenses of all kinds will hardly be preserved from decay.

In clearing of a man's estate, he may as well hurt himself in being too sudden, as in letting it run on too long ; for hasty selling is commonly as disadvantageable as interest. Besides, he that clears at once will relapse, for finding himself out of straits he will revert to his customs ; but he that cleareth by degrees induceth a habit of frugality, and gaineth as well upon his mind as upon his estate. Certainly, who hath a state to repair may not despise small things ; and commonly it is less dishonorable to abridge petty charges than to stoop to petty gettings. A man ought warily to begin charges which, once begun, will continue ; but in matters that return not, he may be more magnificent.

¹ Fixed revenues and disbursements (Latin translation).

XXIX.—OF THE TRUE GREATNESS OF KINGDOMS AND ESTATES.¹

(1612; rewritten, and enlarged about fourfold, 1625.)

THE speech of Themistocles, the Athenian, which was haughty and arrogant in taking so much to himself, had been a grave and wise observation and censure, applied at large to others. Desired at a feast to touch a lute, he said he could not fiddle, but yet he could make a small town a great city. These words, holpen a little with a metaphor, may express two differing abilities in those that deal in business of estate. For if a true survey be taken of counsellors and statesmen, there may be found, though rarely, those which can make a small state great, and yet cannot fiddle; as, on the other side, there will be found a great many that can fiddle very cunningly, but yet are so far from being able to make a small state great, as their gift lieth the other way, — to bring a great and flourishing estate to ruin and decay. And certainly those degenerate arts and shifts, whereby many counsellors and governors gain both favor

¹ There are traces in this essay of the liberal use of Machiavelli's "Discourses," especially I. and II. The passages in question are cited in Dr. Abbott's edition of the Essays.

with their masters and estimation with the vulgar, deserve no better name than fiddling ; being things rather pleasing for the time, and graceful to themselves only, than tending to the weal and advancement of the state which they serve. There are, also, no doubt, counsellors and governors which may be held sufficient, *negotiis pares*, able to manage affairs, and to keep them from precipices and manifest inconveniences ; which, nevertheless, are far from the ability to raise and amplify an estate in power, means, and fortune. But be the workmen what they may be, let us speak of the work : that is, the true greatness of kingdoms and estates, and the means thereof ; an argument fit for great and mighty princes to have in their hand, to the end that neither by over-measuring their forces they lose themselves in vain enterprises ; nor, on the other side, by undervaluing them, they descend to fearful and pusillanimous counsels.

The greatness of an estate in bulk and territory doth fall under measure ; and the greatness of finances and revenue doth fall under computation. The population may appear by musters ; and the number and greatness of cities and towns by cards¹ and maps. But yet there is not anything amongst civil affairs more subject to error, than the right valuation and true judgment concerning the power and forces of an estate. The kingdom of heaven

¹ Charts.

is compared, not to any great kernel or nut, but to a grain of mustard-seed ; which is one of the least grains, but hath in it a property and spirit hastily to get up and spread. So are there states great in territory, and yet not apt to enlarge or command ; and some that have but a small dimension of stem, and yet apt to be the foundations of great monarchies.

Walled towns, stored arsenals and armories, goodly races of horse, chariots of war, elephants, ordnance, artillery, and the like : all this is but a sheep in a lion's skin, except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike. Nay, number itself, in armies, importeth not much where the people is of weak courage ; for, as Virgil saith, it never troubles a wolf how many the sheep be. The army of the Persians, in the plains of Arbela, was such a vast sea of people as it did somewhat astonish the commanders in Alexander's army ; who came to him, therefore, and wished him to set upon them by night ; but he answered, he would not pilfer the victory ; and the defeat was easy. When Tigranes, the Armenian, being encamped upon a hill with four hundred thousand men, discovered the army of the Romans, being not above fourteen thousand, marching towards him, he made himself merry with it, and said, "Yonder men are too many for an ambassage, and too few for a fight." But before the sun set he found them enough to give him the chase with infinite slaugh-

ter. Many are the examples of the great odds between number and courage : so that a man may truly make a judgment, that the principal point of greatness in any state is to have a race of military men.

Neither is money the sinews of war, as it is trivially said, where the sinews of men's arms, in base and effeminate people, are failing ; for Solon said well to Cræsus, when in ostentation he showed him his gold : " Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold." Therefore let any prince or state think soberly of his forces, except his militia of natives be of good and valiant soldiers. And let princes, on the other side, that have subjects of martial disposition, know their own strength ; unless they be otherwise wanting unto themselves. As for mercenary forces, which is the help in this case, all examples show that whatsoever estate or prince doth rest upon them, he may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mew¹ them soon after.²

The blessing of Judah and Issachar will never meet, that the same people or nation should be both the lion's whelp and the ass between burdens : neither will it be, that a people overlaid with taxes should ever become valiant and martial. It is true that taxes levied by consent of the estate do abate men's courage less ; as it hath been seen

¹ Moulte (Latin *mutare*).

² The substance of this paragraph is from Machiavelli.

notably in the excises of the Low Countries, and, in some degree, in the subsidies of England. For you must note that we speak now of the heart, and not of the purse. So that, although the same tribute and tax, laid by consent or by imposing, be all one to the purse, yet it works diversely upon the courage. So that you may conclude that no people overcharged with tribute is fit for empire.

Let states that aim at greatness take heed how their nobility and gentlemen do multiply too fast ; for that maketh the common subject grow to be a peasant and base swain, driven out of heart, and in effect but the gentleman's laborer. Even as you may see in coppice woods, if you leave your staddles¹ too thick you shall never have clean underwood, but shrubs and bushes. So in countries, if the gentlemen be too many the commons will be base ; and you will bring it to that, that not the hundred² poll will be fit for an helmet ; especially as to the infantry, which is the nerve of an army : and so there will be great population, and little strength. This which I speak of hath been nowhere better seen than by comparing of England and France : whereof England, though far less in territory and population, hath been, nevertheless, an overmatch ; in regard the middle people of England make good soldiers,

¹ Young trees left standing after the removal of the underwood.

² " Hundreth," in the text of 1612.

which the peasants of France do not. And herein the device of King Henry VII. (whereof I have spoken largely in the history of his life) was profound and admirable, in making farms, and houses of husbandry, of a standard : that is, maintained with such a proportion of land unto them, as may breed a subject to live in convenient plenty, and no servile condition ; and to keep the plough in the hands of the owners, and not mere hirelings. And thus indeed you shall attain to Virgil's character, which he gives to ancient Italy :

"Terra potens armis, atque ubere glebæ." ¹

Neither is that state (which, for anything I know, is almost peculiar to England, and hardly to be found anywhere else, except it be, perhaps, in Poland) to be passed over : I mean the state of free servants and attendants upon noblemen and gentlemen ; which are noways inferior unto the yeomanry for arms. And therefore, out of all question, the splendor and magnificence, and great retinues, and hospitality of noblemen and gentlemen, received into custom, doth much conduce unto martial greatness ; whereas, contrariwise, the close and reserved living of noblemen and gentlemen causeth a penury of military forces.

By all means it is to be procured that the trunk of Nebuchadnezzar's tree of monarchy be great

¹ A land mighty in war, and rich in the fruits of the soil.

enough to bear the branches and the boughs; that is, that the natural subjects of the crown or state bear a sufficient proportion to the stranger subjects that they govern. Therefore all states that are liberal of naturalization towards strangers are fit for empire. For to think that an handful of people can, with the greatest courage and policy in the world, embrace too large extent of dominion,—it may hold for a time, but it will fail suddenly. The Spartans were a nice¹ people in point of naturalization: whereby, while they kept their compass, they stood firm; but when they did spread, and their boughs were becomen too great for their stem, they became a windfall upon the sudden.²

Never any state was, in this point, so open to receive strangers into their body as were the Romans; therefore it sorted with them accordingly, for they grew to the greatest monarchy. Their manner was to grant naturalization, which they called "*jus civitatis*," and to grant it in the highest degree: that is, not only "*jus commercii*, *jus connubii*, *jus hereditatis*," but also "*jus suffragii*," and "*jus honorum*;"³ and this not to singular persons alone, but likewise to whole families, yea, to cities, and sometimes to nations. Add to this

¹ Scrupulous. Here, exclusive.

² This paragraph is, in substance, from Machiavelli.

³ The rights of commerce, of marriage, of inheritance, of voting, and of holding office.

their custom of plantation of colonies, whereby the Roman plant was removed into the soil of other nations ; and putting both constitutions together, you will say that it was not the Romans that spread upon the world, but it was the world that spread upon the Romans ; and that was the sure way of greatness. I have marvelled sometimes at Spain, how they clasp and contain so large dominions, with so few natural Spaniards ; but sure, the whole compass of Spain is a very great body of a tree, far above Rome and Sparta at the first. And, besides, though they have not had that usage to naturalize liberally, yet they have that which is next to it : that is, to employ, almost indifferently, all nations in their militia of ordinary soldiers, yea, and sometimes in their highest commands. Nay, it seemeth at this instant they are sensible of this want of natives ; as by the Pragmatical Sanction, now published, appeareth.¹

It is certain that sedentary and within-door arts, and delicate manufactures that require rather the finger than the arm, have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition. And generally all warlike people are a little idle, and love danger better than travail ; neither must they be too much broken of it, if they shall be preserved in vigor. Therefore it was great advantage in the

¹ A royal decree of 1622 giving certain privileges to persons who married, and further immunities to those who had six children.

ancient states of Sparta, Athens, Rome, and others, that they had the use of slaves, which commonly did rid those manufactures; but that is abolished, in greatest part, by the Christian law. That which cometh nearest to it, is to leave those arts chiefly to strangers (which for that purpose are the more easily to be received), and to contain the principal bulk of the vulgar natives within those three kinds: tillers of the ground, free servants, and handicraftsmen of strong and manly arts, as smiths, masons, carpenters, etc.; not reckoning professed soldiers.

But above all, for empire and greatness, it importeth most that a nation do profess arms as their principal honor, study, and occupation. For the things which we formerly have spoken of are but habilitations towards arms, and what is habilitation without intention and act? Romulus, after his death, as they report or feign, sent a present¹ to the Romans, that above all they should intend² arms; and then they should prove the greatest empire of the world. The fabric of the state of Sparta was wholly, though not wisely, framed and composed to that scope and end. The Persians and Macedonians had it for a flash. The Gauls, Germans, Goths, Saxons, Normans, and others, had it for a time. The Turks have it at this day, though in great declina-

¹ Compare the expression "by these presents."

² Attend to, profess.

tion. Of Christian Europe, they that have it are in effect only the Spaniards. But it is so plain that every man profiteth in that he most intendeth, that it needeth not to be stood upon. It is enough to point at it, that no nation which doth not directly profess arms may look to have greatness fall into their mouths. And on the other side, it is a most certain oracle of time that those states that continue long in that profession, as the Romans and Turks principally have done, do wonders; and those that have professed arms but for an age have, notwithstanding, commonly attained that greatness in that age, which maintained them long after, when their profession and exercise of arms hath grown to decay.

Incident to this point is for a state to have those laws or customs which may reach forth unto them just occasions, as may be pretended, of war; for there is that justice imprinted in the nature of men that they enter not upon wars, whereof so many calamities do ensue, but upon some, at the least specious, grounds and quarrels. The Turk hath at hand, for cause of war, the propagation of his law or sect, — a quarrel that he may always command. The Romans, though they esteemed the extending the limits of their empire to be great honor to their generals when it was done, yet they never rested upon that alone to begin a war. First, therefore, let nations that pretend to greatness have this, that they be sensible of wrongs, either upon bor-

derers, merchants, or politic ministers ; and that they sit not too long upon a provocation. Secondly, let them be prest¹ and ready to give aids and succors to their confederates, as it ever was with the Romans ; insomuch as, if the confederate had leagues defensive with divers other states, and upon invasion offered did implore their aids severally, yet the Romans would ever be the foremost, and leave it to none other to have the honor. As for the wars which were anciently made on the behalf of a kind of party, or tacit conformity of estate, I do not see how they may be well justified : as when the Romans made a war for the liberty of Græcia ; or when the Lacedæmonians and Athenians made wars to set up or pull down democracies and oligarchies ; or when wars were made by foreigners, under the pretence of justice or protection, to deliver the subjects of others from tyranny and oppression ; and the like. Let it suffice that no estate expect to be great, that is not awake upon any just occasion of arming.

No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic ; and certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honorable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever ; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health ; for in a slothful peace both courages will effemi-

¹ Prompt.

nate and manners corrupt. But howsoever it be for happiness, without all question for greatness, it maketh to be still for the most part in arms : and the strength of a veteran army (though it be a chargeable business) always on foot, is that which commonly giveth the law, or at least the reputation amongst all neighbor states ; as may well be seen in Spain, which hath had in one part or other a veteran army almost continually now by the space of six-score years.

To be master of the sea is an abridgment of a monarchy. Cicero, writing to Atticus of Pompey his preparation against Cæsar, saith : "*Consilium Pompeii plane Themistocleum est ; putat enim, qui mari potitur, eum rerum potiri.*"¹ And without doubt Pompey had tired out Cæsar, if upon vain confidence he had not left that way. We see the great effects of battles by sea : the battle of Actium decided the empire of the world ; the battle of Lepanto² arrested the greatness of the Turk. There be many examples where sea fights have been final to the war ; but this is when princes or states have set up their rest³ upon the battles. But thus much is certain, that he that commands

¹ Pompey's plan is quite Themistoclean ; for he thinks that he who commands the sea, is master.

² A.D. 1571. Cervantes lost his left arm there. Bacon was then ten years of age.

³ Risked everything. A metaphor from the game of primero. "To set up one's rest" meant "to stand upon one's cards."

the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much and as little of the war as he will ; whereas those that be strongest by land are many times, nevertheless, in great straits. Surely, at this day, with us of Europe, the vantage of strength at sea (which is one of the principal dowries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great : both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are not merely inland, but girt with the sea most part of their compass ; and because the wealth of both Indies seems, in great part, but an accessory to the command of the seas.

The wars of latter ages seem to be made in the dark in respect of the glory and honor which reflected upon men from the wars in ancient time. There be now for martial encouragement some degrees and orders of chivalry, which, nevertheless, are conferred promiscuously upon soldiers and no soldiers ; and some remembrance perhaps upon the scutcheon ; and some hospitals for maimed soldiers ; and such-like things. But in ancient times the trophies erected upon the place of the victory ; the funeral laudatives and monuments for those that died in the wars ; the crowns and garlands personal ; the style of emperor, which the great kings of the world after borrowed ; the triumphs of the generals upon their return ; the great donatives and largesses upon the disbanding of the armies, — were things able to

inflammé all men's courages. But, above all, that of the triumph amongst the Romans was not pageants or gaudery, but one of the wisest and noblest institutions that ever was. For it contained three things : honor to the general, riches to the treasury out of the spoils, and donatives to the army. But that honor, perhaps, were not fit for monarchies, except it be in the person of the monarch himself, or his sons ; as it came to pass in the times of the Roman emperors, who did impropriate the actual triumphs to themselves and their sons, for such wars as they did achieve in person ; and left only, for wars achieved by subjects, some triumphal garments and ensigns to the général.

To conclude : no man can by care-taking, as the Scripture saith, add a cubit to his stature in this little model of a man's body ; but in the great frame of kingdoms and commonwealths, it is in the power of princes or estates to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms ; for by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs as we have now touched, they may sow greatness to their posterity and succession. But these things are commonly not observed, but left to take their chance.

XXX.—OF REGIMENT¹ OF HEALTH.

(1597 ; one paragraph added, 1612 ; further enlarged,
1625.)

THERE is a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic ; a man's own observation, what he finds good of and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health. But it is a safer conclusion to say, "This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue it," than this, "I find no offence of this, therefore I may use it." For strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses which are owing a man till his age. Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still ; for age will not be defied. Beware of sudden change in any great point of diet, and if necessity enforce it, fit the rest to it ; for it is a secret, both in nature and state, that it is safer to change many things than one. Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, apparel, and the like, and try in anything thou shalt judge hurtful to discontinue it by little and little ; but so, as if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change, thou come back to it

¹ Regimen.

again: for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome, from that which is good particularly, and fit for thine own body.

To be free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat and of sleep and of exercise, is one of the best precepts of long lasting. As for the passions and studies of the mind, avoid envy, anxious fears, anger fretting inwards, subtile and knotty inquisitions, joys and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes; mirth rather than joy, variety of delights rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature.

If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you shall need it. If you make it too familiar, it will work no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom; for those diets alter the body more and trouble it less. Despise no new accident in your body, but ask opinion of it. In sickness respect health principally, and in health action; for those that put their bodies to endure in health may, in most sicknesses which are not very sharp, be cured only with diet and tendering.¹

¹ Nursing.

Celsus could never have spoken it as a physician had he not been a wise man withal, when he giveth it for one of the great precepts of health and lasting that a man do vary and interchange contraries ; but with an inclination to the more benign extreme. Use fasting and full eating, but rather full eating ; watching and sleep, but rather sleep ; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise ; and the like. So shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries.¹

Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humor of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease ; and some other are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper, or if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either sort ; and forget not to call as well the best acquainted with your body as the best reputed of for his faculty.

XXXI.—OF SUSPICION.

(1625.)

SUSPICIONS amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds,—they ever fly by twilight. Certainly they are to be repressed, or, at the least,

¹ The foregoing paragraph was added in 16

well guarded ; for they cloud the mind, they lose friends, and they check¹ with business, whereby business cannot go on currently and constantly ; they dispose kings to tyranny, husbands to jealousy, wise men to irresolution and melancholy. They are defects not in the heart,² but in the brain, for they take place in the stoniest natures ; as in the example of Henry VII. of England, — there was not a more suspicious man nor a more stout. And in such a composition they do small hurt, for commonly they are not admitted but with examination, whether they be likely or no ; but in fearful natures they gain ground too fast.

There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little ; and, therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more and not to keep their suspicions in smother. What would men have ? Do they think those they employ and deal with are saints ? Do they not think they will have their own ends, and be truer to themselves than to them ? Therefore there is no better way to moderate suspicions than to account upon such suspicions as true, and yet to bridle them as false ; for so far a man ought to make use of suspicions, as to provide as if that should be true that he suspects, yet it may do him no hurt.

¹ Interfere.

² Courage. Compare *dishearten* (discourage).

Suspicious that the mind of itself gathers are but buzzes ; but suspicions that are artificially nourished, and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings. Certainly, the best mean to clear the way in this same wood of suspicions, is frankly to communicate them with the party that he suspects ; for thereby he shall be sure to know more of the truth of them than he did before, and withal shall make that party more circumspect not to give further cause of suspicion. But this would¹ not be done to men of base natures ; for they, if they find themselves once suspected, will never be true. The Italian says, "*Sospetto licentia fede*," as if suspicion did give a passport to faith ; but it ought rather to kindle it to discharge itself.

XXXII. — OF DISCOURSE.

(1597 ; somewhat enlarged, 1612 ; considerably enlarged, 1625.)

SOME in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment in discerning what is true ; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought. Some have certain commonplaces and themes wherein they are good, and want variety ; which kind of poverty is for the

¹ Should. See note 1, Essay xxii. par

most part tedious, and, when it is once perceived, ridiculous.

The honorablest part of talk is to give the occasion, and again to moderate, and pass to somewhat else ; for then a man leads the dance. It is good in discourse and speech of conversation to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest ; for it is a dull thing to tire, and, as we say now, to jade anything too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it ; namely, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity. Yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant and to the quick. That is a vein which would¹ be bridled :

*"Parce, puer, stimulis, et fortius utere loris."*²

And generally men ought to find the difference between saltness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory.

He that questioneth much shall learn much and content much ; but especially if he apply his ques-

¹ Requires to. See note 1, Essay xxii. page 128.

² Spare the whip, boy, and tug harder at the reins.

tions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh, for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge. But let his questions not be troublesome, for that is fit for a poser.¹ And let him be sure to leave other men their turns to speak. Nay, if there be any that would reign, and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off and bring others on; as musicians use to do with those that dance too long galliards.²

If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought another time to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, "He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself." And there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace, and that is in commending virtue in another, especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth.

Speech of touch³ towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal

¹ An examiner, who *apposes*, or poses questions. Still so used at Eton and Winchester.

² A lively French dance for two persons only.

³ Of personal reference.

cheer in his house ; the other would ask of those that had been at the other's table, "Tell truly, was there never a flout or dry blow given?" To which the guest would answer, such and such a thing passed. The lord would say, "I thought he would mar a good dinner."

Discretion of speech is more than eloquence, and to speak agreeably¹ to him with whom we deal is more than to speak in good words or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness ; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, sheweth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course are yet nimblest in the turn, as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances ere one come to the matter, is wearisome ; to use none at all, is blunt.²

XXXIII. — OF PLANTATIONS.

(1625.)

PLANTATIONS are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works. When the world was young it begat more children, but now it is old it begets

¹ "Fitly and suitably" (Latin translation).

² This last thought is expanded in Essay xxv. paragraph 4, page 139.

fewer ; for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms.

I like a plantation in a pure soil, — that is, where people are not displanted to the end to plant in others ; for else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods, for you must make account to lose almost twenty years' profit, and expect your recompense in the end ; for the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations hath been the base and hasty drawing of profit in the first years. It is true, speedy profit is not to be neglected, as far as may stand with the good of the plantation, but no further.

It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant ; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation : for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country to the discredit of the plantation. The people wherewith you plant ought to be gardeners, ploughmen, laborers, smiths, carpenters, joiners, fishermen, fowlers, with some few apothecaries, surgeons, cooks, and bakers.

In a country of plantation, first look about what kind of victual the country yields of itself to hand : as chestnuts, walnuts, pine-apples, olives, dates, plums, cherries, wild honey, and the like ; and

make use of them. Then consider what victual or esculent things there are, which grow speedily and within the year : as parsnips, carrots, turnips, onions, radish, artichokes of Jerusalem, maize, and the like. For wheat, barley, and oats, they ask too much labor ; but with pease and beans you may begin, both because they ask less labor, and because they serve for meat as well as for bread. And of rice likewise cometh a great increase, and it is a kind of meat. Above all, there ought to be brought store of biscuit, oatmeal, flour, meal, and the like, in the beginning, till bread may be had. For beasts or birds take chiefly such as are least subject to diseases and multiply fastest : as swine, goats, cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, house-doves, and the like.

The victual in plantations ought to be expended almost as in a besieged town,—that is, with certain ¹ allowance. And let the main part of the ground employed to gardens or corn be to a common stock, and to be laid in and stored up, and then delivered out in proportion ; besides some spots of ground that any particular person will manure for his own private.²

Consider likewise what commodities the soil where the plantation is doth naturally yield, that

¹ Fixed.

² Compare "Twelfth Night," iii. 4.

"Let me enjoy my private."

they may some way help to defray the charge of the plantation; so it be not, as was said, to the untimely prejudice of the main business, as it hath fared with tobacco in Virginia. Wood commonly aboundeth but too much, and therefore timber is fit to be one. If there be iron ore, and streams whereupon to set the mills, iron is a brave commodity where wood aboundeth. Making of bay-salt, if the climate be proper for it, would¹ be put in experience. Growing silk likewise, if any be, is a likely commodity. Pitch and tar, where store of firs and pines are, will not fail. So drugs and sweet woods, where they are, cannot but yield great profit; soap-ashes, likewise, and other things that may be thought of. But moil not too much under ground, for the hope of mines is very uncertain, and useth to make the planters lazy in other things.

For government, let it be in the hands of one, assisted with some counsel; and let them have commission to exercise martial laws, with some limitation. And above all, let men make that profit of being in the wilderness, as they have God always and his service before their eyes. Let not the government of the plantation depend upon too many counsellors and undertakers in the country that planteth, but upon a temperate number; and let those be rather noblemen and gentlemen than

¹ Should. But see note 1, Essay xxii. page 128.

merchants ; for they look ever to the present gain. Let there be freedoms from custom till the plantation be of strength ; and not only freedom from custom, but freedom to carry their commodities where they may make their best of them, except there be some special cause of caution. Cram not in people by sending too fast company after company, but rather hearken how they waste, and send supplies proportionably ; but so as the number may live well in the plantation, and not by surcharge be in penury.

It hath been a great endangering to the health of some plantations that they have built along the sea and rivers, in marish and unwholesome grounds. Therefore, though you begin there to avoid carriage and other like discommodities, yet build still rather upwards from the streams than along. It concerneth likewise the health of the plantation that they have good store of salt with them, that they may use it in their victuals when it shall be necessary.

If you plant where savages are, do not only entertain them with trifles and gingles,¹ but use them justly and graciously, with sufficient guard, nevertheless ; and do not win their favor by helping them to invade their enemies, but for their defence it is not amiss. And send oft of them over to the country that plants, that they may see a better

¹ Jingles, little bells, etc.

condition than their own, and commend it when they return.

When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as well as with men, that the plantation may spread into generations, and not be ever pieced from without. It is the sinfulness of the world to forsake or destitute¹ a plantation once in forwardness; for, besides the dishonor, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable persons.

XXXIV.—OF RICHES.

(1612; greatly enlarged, 1625.)

I CANNOT call riches better than the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better, "*impedimenta*," for as the baggage is to an army so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared, nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory.

Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit.² So saith Solomon, "Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?" The personal fruition

¹ Neglect, abandon.

² Illusion.

in any man cannot reach to feel great riches ; there is a custody of them, or a power of dole and donative of them, or a fame of them, but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities? And what works of ostentation are undertaken, because¹ there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then, you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles. As Solomon saith, "Riches are as a stronghold in the imagination of the rich man." But this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact. For certainly great riches have sold more men than they have bought out.

Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly. Yet have no abstract nor friarly contempt of them ; but distinguish, as Cicero saith well of Rabirius Posthumus, "*in studio rei amplificandæ apparebat, non avaritiæ prædam, sed instrumentum bonitati quæri.*"² Hearken also to Solomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches : "Qui festinat ad divitias, non erit insons."³ The poets feign that when Plutus, which is riches, is

¹ In order that.

² In the endeavor to increase his estate, it was evident that he sought not a prey for avarice, but an instrument of beneficence.

³ He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent.

sent from Jupiter, he limps, and goes slowly, but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs, and is swift of foot ; meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labor pace slowly, but when they come by the death of others, as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like, they come tumbling upon a man. But it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the devil. For when riches come from the devil, as by fraud, and oppression, and unjust means, they come upon speed.¹

The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul. Parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent, for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches, for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth's; but it is slow. And yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman in England that had the greatest audits of any man in my time : a great grazier, a great sheep-master, a great timber-man, a great collier, a great corn-

¹ Compare Webster's "*Duchess of Malfi*," iii. 2 : —

"Pluto, the god of riches,
When he's sent by Jupiter to any man,
He goes limping, to signify that wealth
That comes on God's name comes slowly : but when he's sent
On the devil's errand, he rides post and comes in by scuttles."

See note, Essay v. page 56.

master, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry; so as the earth seemed a sea to him, in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, that himself came very hardly to a little riches, and very easily to great riches. For when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect the prime of markets, and overcome¹ those bargains which, for their greatness, are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly.²

The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things chiefly, by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing. But the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature, when men shall wait upon others' necessity; broke³ by servants and instruments to draw them on; put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen;⁴ and the like practices, which are crafty and naught. As for the chopping⁵ of bargains, — when a man buys, not to hold, but to sell over again, — that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer.⁶ Sharings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst, as that whereby a

¹ Master, command.

² Greatly.

³ Negotiate.

⁴ Buyers.

⁵ Bartering.

⁶ The regrator gets the advantage of both.

man doth eat his bread "in sudore vultus alieni,"¹ and besides, doth plough upon Sundays. But yet, certain though it be, it hath flaws; for that the scriveners and brokers do value² unsound men, to serve their own turn.

The fortune in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches, as it was with the first sugar-man in the Canaries. Therefore, if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters, especially if the times be fit. He that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly grow to great riches; and he that puts all upon adventures, doth oftentimes break, and come to poverty: it is good therefore to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption of wares for resale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and to store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service, though it be of the best rise, yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humors, and other servile conditions, they may be placed amongst the worst. As for fishing for testaments and executorships (as Tacitus saith of Seneca, "*Testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi*"³),

¹ In the sweat of another man's face. See Essay "Of Usury," page 205.

² Represent as trustworthy.

³ He hauled in wills and wardships as with a net.

it is yet worse ; by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in service.

Believe not much them that seem to despise riches, for they despise them that despair of them ; and none worse when they come to them. Be not penny-wise ; riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be set flying to bring in more.

Men leave their riches either to their kindred, or to the public ; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great estate left to an heir is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better stablished in years and judgment. Likewise glorious¹ gifts and foundations are like sacrifices without salt ; and but the painted sepulchres of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly. Therefore measure not thine advancements² by quantity, but frame them by measure. And defer not charities till death ; for certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so, is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

XXXV. — OF PROPHECIES.

(1625.)

I MEAN not to speak of divine prophecies, nor of heathen oracles, nor of natural predictions, but only of prophecies that have been of certain mem-

¹ Vain-glorious.

² Gifts.

ory and from hidden causes. Saith the Pythonissa to Saul, "To-morrow thou and thy son shall be with me." Homer hath these verses :

"At domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,
Et nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis :"¹

a prophecy, as it seems, of the Roman Empire. Seneca, the tragedian, hath these verses :

"Venient annis
Secula seris, quibus oceanus
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat tellus, Tiphysque novos
Detegat orbes ; nec sit terris
Ultima Thule :"²

a prophecy of the discovery of America. The daughter of Polycrates dreamed that Jupiter bathed her father, and Apollo anointed him : and it came to pass that he was crucified in an open place, where the sun made his body run with sweat, and the rain washed it. Philip of Macedon dreamed he sealed up his wife's belly, whereby he did expound it that his wife should be barren ; but

¹ Over every shore shall reign the house of Æneas,
And his children's children, and their descendants forever.

The verses are adapted by Virgil from Homer (*Æneid*, iii. 97 ; *Iliad*, xx. 307).

² "Ocean in years to come shall loose her bands,
The vast earth be disclosed, and Tiphys show
New worlds, nor Thule be the farthest bound."

Aristander the soothsayer told him his wife was with child, because men do not use to seal vessels that are empty. A phantasm that appeared to M. Brutus, in his tent, said to him, "Philippis iterum me videbis."¹ Tiberius said to Galba, "Tu quoque, Galba, degustabis imperium."² In Vespasian's time there went a prophecy in the East, that those that should come forth of Judea should reign over the world ; which, though it may be was meant of our Saviour, yet Tacitus expounds it of Vespasian. Domitian dreamed, the night before he was slain, that a golden head was growing out of the nape of his neck ; and indeed the succession that followed him for many years made golden times. Henry VI. of England said of Henry VII., when he was a lad, and gave him water, "This is the lad that shall enjoy the crown for which we strive." When I was in France, I heard from one Dr. Pena that the queen-mother, who was given to curious arts, caused the king her husband's nativity to be calculated under a false name, and the astrologer gave a judgment that he should be killed in a duel ; at which the queen laughed, thinking her husband to be above challenges and duels ; but he was slain upon a course at tilt, the splinters of the staff of Montgomery going in at his beaver. The trivial prophecy which I heard when I was a child,

¹ Thou shalt see me again at Philippi.

² Thou likewise, Galba, shalt taste of empire.

and Queen Elizabeth was in the flower of her years, was :

“ When Hempe is sponne,
England's done ; ”

whereby it was generally conceived that, after the princes had reigned which had the principal letters of that word *hempe* (which were Henry, Edward, Mary, Philip, and Elizabeth), England should come to utter confusion ; which, thanks be to God, is verified only in the change of the name, for that the king's style is now no more of England, but of Britain. There was also another prophecy before the year of eighty-eight, which I do not well understand :

“ There shall be seen upon a day,
Between the Baugh and the May,¹
The black fleet of Norway.
When that is come and gone,
England, build houses of lime and stone,
For after wars shall you have none.”

It was generally conceived to be meant of the Spanish fleet that came in eighty-eight ; for that the King of Spain's surname, as they say, is Norway. The prediction of Regiomontanus,

“ Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus,”²

was thought likewise accomplished in the sending of that great fleet, being the greatest in strength,

¹ The Bass rock and the Isle of May in the Frith of Forth.

² Eighty-eight, a year of wonders.

though not in number, of all that ever swam upon the sea. As for Cleon's dream, I think it was a jest : it was that he was devoured of a long dragon ; and it was expounded of a maker of sausages, that troubled him exceedingly. There are numbers of the like kind, especially if you include dreams and predictions of astrology. But I have set down these few only, of certain credit, for example.

My judgment is that they ought all to be despised, and ought to serve but for winter talk by the fireside. Though when I say despised, I mean it as for belief ; for otherwise the spreading or publishing of them is in no sort to be despised, for they have done much mischief, and I see many severe laws made to suppress them. That that hath given them grace, and some credit, consisteth in three things. First, that men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss, as they do generally also of dreams. The second is, that probable conjectures, or obscure traditions, many times turn themselves into prophecies ; while the nature of man, which coveteth divination, thinks it no peril to foretell that which indeed they do but collect ; as that of Seneca's verse. For so much was then subject to demonstration, that the globe of the earth had great parts beyond the Atlantic, which might be probably conceived not to be all sea ; and adding thereto the tradition in Plato's *Timæus* and his *Atlanticus*, it might encourage one to turn it to a prediction. The third and last,

which is the great one, is that almost all of them, being infinite in number, have been impostures, and by idle and crafty brains merely contrived and feigned after the event past.

XXXVI. — OF AMBITION.

(1612; much enlarged, 1625.)

AMBITION is like choler; which is an humor that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped. But if it be stopped, and cannot have his way, it becometh adust,¹ and thereby malign and venomous. So ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous; but if they be checked in their desires they become secretly discontent, and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or state. Therefore it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so as they be still progressive and not retrograde; which, because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all. For if they rise not with their service they will take order to make their service fall with them.

¹ Inflamed. An old medical term (Latin *adustus*).

But since we have said it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit we speak in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious ; for the use of their service dispenseth with ¹ the rest ; and to take a soldier without ambition is to pull off his spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men in being screens to princes in matters of danger and envy ; for no man will take that part except he be like a seeled ² dove, that mounts and mounts, because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that overtops ; as Tiberius used Macro in the pulling down of Sejanus.

Since, therefore, they must be used in such cases, there resteth to speak how they are to be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them if they be of mean birth, than if they be noble ; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular ; and if they be rather new raised, than grown cunning and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some a weakness in princes to have favorites ; but it is, of all others, the best remedy against ambitious great ones. For when the way of pleasuring and displeasuring lieth by the favorite, it is impossible

¹ The value of their service makes amends for.

² Seel: to blind by closing the eyelids with a fine thread.

any other should be over-great. Another means to curb them is to balance them by others as proud as they. But then there must be some middle counsellors to keep things steady ; for without that ballast the ship will roll too much. At the least a prince may animate and inure some meaner persons to be, as it were, scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious¹ to ruin, if they be of fearful natures it may do well ; but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may not be done with safety suddenly, the only way is the interchange continually of favors and disgraces ; whereby they may not know what to expect, and be as it were in a wood.

Of ambitions, it is less harmful the ambition to prevail in great things, than that other to appear in everything ; for that breeds confusion, and mars business. But yet it is less danger to have an ambitious man stirring in business, than great in dependances.² He that seeketh to be eminent amongst able men hath a great task ; but that is ever good for the public. But he that plots to be the only figure amongst ciphers, is the decay of an whole age.

Honor hath three things in it : the vantage ground to do good ; the approach to kings and

¹ Liable.

² Dependants collectively ; following.

principal persons ; and the raising of a man's own fortunes. He that hath the best of these intentions when he aspireth, is an honest man ; and that prince that can discern of these intentions in another that aspireth, is a wise prince. Generally, let princes and states choose such ministers as are more sensible of duty than of rising ; and such as love business rather upon conscience than upon bravery ; and let them discern a busy nature from a willing mind.

XXXVII. — OF MASQUES AND TRIUMPHS.

(1625.)

THESE things are but toys to come amongst such serious observations. But yet, since princes will have such things, it is better they should be graced with elegancy than daubed with cost.

Dancing to song is a thing of great state and pleasure. I understand it that the song be in quire, placed aloft, and accompanied with some broken music ; and the ditty fitted to the device. Acting in song, especially in dialogues, hath an extreme good grace : I say acting, not dancing (for that is a mean and vulgar thing) ; and the voices of the dialogue would ¹ be strong and manly

¹ Should. See note 1, Essay xxii. page 128.

(a bass and a tenor, no treble); and the ditty high and tragical, not nice or dainty. Several quires placed one over against another, and taking the voice by catches, anthem-wise, give great pleasure. Turning dances into figure is a childish curiosity. And generally let it be noted that those things which I here set down are such as do naturally take the sense, and not respect petty wonderments. It is true the alterations of scenes, so it be quietly and without noise, are things of great beauty and pleasure; for they feed and relieve the eye before it be full of the same object. Let the scenes abound with light, specially colored and varied; and let the masquers, or any other that are to come down from the scene, have some motions upon the scene itself before their coming down; for it draws the eye strangely, and makes it with great pleasure to desire to see that it cannot perfectly discern. Let the songs be loud and cheerful, and not chirpings or pulings. Let the music likewise be sharp and loud, and well placed. The colors that show best by candle-light are white, carnation, and a kind of sea-water green; and oes, or spangs, as they are of no great cost, so they are of most glory. As for rich embroidery, it is lost and not discerned. Let the suits of the masquers be graceful and such as become the person when the vizars are off; not after examples of known attires—Turks, soldiers, mariners, and the like. Let anti-masques not be long; they have been com-

monly of fools, satyrs, baboons, wild men, antiques,¹ beasts, sprites, witches, Ethiopes, pigmies, turquets,² nymphs, rustics, Cupids, statuas moving, and the like. As for angels, it is not comical enough to put them in anti-masques; and anything that is hideous, as devils, giants, is on the other side as unfit. But, chiefly, let the music of them be recreative, and with some strange changes. Some sweet odors suddenly coming forth, without any drops falling, are in such a company as there is steam and heat, things of great pleasure and refreshment. Double masques, one of men, another of ladies, addeth state and variety. But all is nothing except the room be kept clear and neat.

For jousts, and tourneys, and barriers, the glories of them are chiefly in the chariots wherein the challengers make their entry; especially if they be drawn with strange beasts, as lions, bears, camels, and the like; or in the devices of their entrance; or in the bravery of their liveries; or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armor. But enough of these toys.

¹ Antics, i. e. grotesque or clownish figures.

² Turkish dwarfs?

XXXVIII.—OF NATURE IN MEN.

(1612; enlarged and altered, 1625.)

NATURE is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return ; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune ; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature. He that seeketh victory over his nature let him not set himself too great nor too small tasks ; for the first will make him dejected by often failings ; and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings. And at the first let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders or rushes ; but after a time let him practise with disadvantages, as dancers do with thick shoes. For it breeds great perfection, if the practice be harder than the use. Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time, —like to him that would say over the four-and-twenty letters when he was angry ; then to go less in quantity, —as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths to a draught at a meal ; and, lastly, to discontinue altogether. But if a man have the

fortitude and resolution to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best :

"Optimus ille animi vindex, lædentia pectus
Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel."¹

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature as a wand to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right ; understanding it, where the contrary extreme is no vice.

Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission. For both the pause reinforceth the new onset ; and if a man that is not perfect be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors as his abilities, and induce one habit of both ; and there is no means to help this but by seasonable intermissions. But let not a man trust his victory over his nature too far ; for nature will lay² buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion or temptation. Like as it was with Æsop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end till a mouse ran before her. Therefore let a man either avoid the occasion altogether, or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it.

¹ "Wouldst thou be free ? The chains that gall thy breast
With one strong effort burst, and be at rest."
OVID (the translation from Spedding).

² So in the original.

A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him.

They are happy men whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, "*Multum incola fuit anima mea*,"¹ when they converse in those things they do not affect.² In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it of themselves, so as the spaces of other business or studies will suffice. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

XXXIX. — OF CUSTOM AND EDUCATION.

(1612; enlarged, 1625.)

MEN's thoughts are much according to their inclination; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions; but their deeds are after as they have been accus-

¹ My soul hath been long a sojourner (Vulgate).

² When they are engaged in pursuits foreign to their tastes.

tomed. And therefore, as Machiavel well noteth, though in an evil-favored instance, there is no trusting to the force of nature, nor to the bravery¹ of words, except it be corroborate by custom. His instance is, that for the achieving of a desperate conspiracy a man should not rest upon the fierceness of any man's nature, or his resolute undertakings, but take such an one as hath had his hands formerly in blood. But Machiavel knew not of a friar Clement, nor a Ravailac, nor a Jaureguy, nor a Baltazar Gerard;² yet his rule holdeth still, that nature, nor the engagement of words, are not so forcible as custom. Only superstition is now so well advanced that men of the first blood³ are as firm as butchers by occupation; and votary⁴ resolution is made equipollent to custom, even in matter of blood. In cther things the predominancy of custom is everywhere visible; insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before; as if they were dead images, and engines moved only by the wheels of custom.

We see also the reign or tyranny of custom, what it is. The Indians, I mean the sect of their

¹ Boastfulness.

² These four political assassins were all of Bacon's time.

³ Men who are committing murder for the first time.

⁴ Confirmed by a vow.

wise men,¹ lay themselves quietly upon a stack of wood, and so sacrifice themselves by fire. Nay, the wives strive to be burned with the corpses of their husbands. The lads of Sparta, of ancient time, were wont to be scourged upon the altar of Diana without so much as queching.² I remember in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time of England, an Irish rebel, condemned, put up a petition to the deputy that he might be hanged in a with, and not in an halter, because it had been so used with former rebels. There be monks in Russia, for penance, that will sit a whole night in a vessel of water, till they be engaged with hard ice.

Many examples may be put of the force of custom, both upon mind and body. Therefore, since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavor to obtain good customs. Certainly custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years ; this we call education, which is, in effect, but an early custom. So we see, in languages the tongue is more pliant to all expressions and sounds, the joints are more supple to all feats of activity and motions, in youth than afterwards. For it is true that late learners cannot so well take the ply ; except it be in some minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment, which is exceeding rare.

¹ The Gymnosophists.

² Flinching (from *quick*, alive).

But if the force of custom simple and separate, be great, the force of custom copulate and conjoined and collegiate, is far greater. For there example teacheth, company comforteth, emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth; so as in such places the force of custom is in his exaltation.¹ Certainly the great multiplication of virtues upon human nature resteth upon societies well ordained and disciplined; for commonwealths and good governments do nourish virtue grown, but do not much mend the seeds. But the misery is, that the most effectual means are now applied to the ends least to be desired.

XL. — OF FORTUNE.

(1612; slightly enlarged, 1625.)

It cannot be denied but outward accidents conduce much to fortune: favor, opportunity, death of others, occasion fitting virtue. But chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands. "Faber quisque fortunæ suæ,"² saith the poet. And the most frequent of external causes is, that the folly of one man is the fortune of another; for no man prospers so suddenly as by others'

¹ The word *zenith* renders the meaning. But *exaltation* is here used in the astrological sense.

² Every man the architect of his own fortune.

errors. "Serpens nisi serpentem comederit non fit draco."¹ Overt and apparent virtues bring forth praise, but there be secret and hidden virtues that bring forth fortune; certain deliveries of a man's self which have no name. The Spanish name, *desemboltura*,² partly expresseth them: when there be not stonds³ nor restiveness in a man's nature, but that the wheels of his mind keep way with the wheels of his fortune. For so Livy, after he had described Cato Major in these words, "In illo viro, tantum robur corporis et animi fuit, ut quocunque loco natus esset, fortunam sibi facturus videretur,"⁴ falleth upon that, that he had *versatile ingenium*.⁵ Therefore, if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see fortune; for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible. The way of fortune is like the milken way in the sky, which is a meeting or knot of a number of small stars, not seen asunder, but giving light together. So are there a number of little and scarce discerned virtues, or rather faculties and customs, that make men fortunate. The Italians note some of them, such as a man would little think. When they speak of one that

¹ A serpent becomes a dragon only by devouring a serpent.

² Literally, a turning of one's self inside out (Abbott).

³ Stands (checks). Explained by *restiveness*.

⁴ In that great man there was such strength of body and of mind that no matter where he had been born, he could doubtless have made his fortune.

⁵ A versatile nature.

cannot do amiss, they will throw in into his other conditions, that he hath "poco di matto."¹ And, certainly, there be not two more fortunate properties than to have a little of the fool, and not too much of the honest. Therefore extreme lovers of their country or masters were never fortunate, neither can they be ; for when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way.

An hasty fortune maketh an enterpriser and remover (the French hath it better, *entreprenant*, or *remuant*) ; but the exercised fortune maketh the able man. Fortune is to be honored and respected, and it be but for her daughters, Confidence and Reputation. For those two felicity breedeth ; the first within a man's self, the latter in others towards him.

All wise men, to decline the envy of their own virtues, use to ascribe them to Providence and Fortune ; for so they may the better assume them, and besides it is greatness in a man to be the care of the higher powers. So Cæsar said to the pilot in the tempest, "Cæsarem portas, et fortunam ejus."² So Sylla chose the name of *felix*³ and not of *magnus* ;⁴ and it hath been noted that those that ascribe openly too much to their own wisdom and policy, end infortunate. It is written

¹ A little of the fool.

² You carry Cæsar and his fortune.

³ Fortunate.

⁴ Great.

that Timotheus, the Athenian, after he had, in the account he gave to the state of his government, often interlaced this speech, "And in this fortune had no part," never prospered in anything he undertook afterwards.

Certainly there be whose fortunes are like Homer's verses, that have a slide and easiness more than the verses of other poets; as Plutarch saith of Timoleon's fortune, in respect of that of Agesilaus or Epaminondas. And that this should be, no doubt it is much in a man's self.

XLI. — OF USURY.

(1625.)

MANY have made witty invectives against usury. They say that it is pity the devil should have God's part, which is the tithe; that the usurer is the greatest Sabbath-breaker, because his plough goeth every Sunday; that the usurer is the drone that Virgil speaketh of:

"Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent;"¹

that the usurer breaketh the first law that was made for mankind after the fall, which was "In sudore vultus tui comedes panem tuum," not "In sudore

¹ They drive away the drones, an idle herd, from the hives.

vultus alieni ;" ¹ that usurers should have orange-tawny bonnets, ² because they do judaize ; that it is against nature for money to beget money ; and the like. I say this only, that usury is a "concessum propter duritiem cordis ;" ³ for since there must be borrowing and lending, and men are so hard of heart as they will not lend freely, usury must be permitted. Some others have made suspicious and cunning propositions of banks, discovery of men's estates, and other inventions. But few have spoken of usury usefully. It is good to set before us the incommodities and commodities ⁴ of usury, that the good may be either weighed out or culled out ; and warily to provide that, while we make forth to that which is better, we meet not with that which is worse.

The discommodities of usury are : — First, that it makes fewer merchants. For were it not for this lazy trade of usury, money would not lie still, but would in great part be employed upon merchandising, which is the *vena porta* ⁵ of wealth in a state. The second, that it makes poor merchants. For as a farmer cannot husband his

¹ "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," not "In the sweat of another's face." See Essay "Of Riches," page 185.

² "Yellow bonnets" were assigned by law to the Jews.

³ A thing allowed by reason of the hardness of men's hearts.

⁴ *Commodity* means *advantage*.

⁵ The gate-vein. See note, Essay xix. page 117.

ground so well if he sit at a great rent, so the merchant cannot drive his trade so well if he sit at great usury. The third is incident to the other two ; and that is the decay of customs of kings or states, which ebb or flow with merchandising. The fourth, that it bringeth the treasure of a realm or state into a few hands. For the usurer being at certainties, and others at uncertainties, at the end of the game most of the money will be in the box ; and ever a state flourisheth when wealth is more equally spread. The fifth, that it beats down the price of land ; for the employment of money is chiefly either merchandising or purchasing, and usury waylays both. The sixth, that it doth dull and damp all industries, improvements, and new inventions, wherein money would be stirring, if it were not for this slug. The last, that it is the canker and ruin of many men's estates ; which in process of time breeds a public poverty.

On the other side, the commodities of usury are : — First, that howsoever usury in some respect hindereth merchandising, yet in some other it advanceth it ; for it is certain that the greatest part of trade is driven by young merchants, upon borrowing at interest ; so as if the usurer either call in or keep back his money, there will ensue presently a great stand of trade. The second is, that were it not for this easy borrowing upon interest, men's necessities would draw upon them a most sudden undoing, in that they would be forced

to sell their means, be it lands or goods, far under foot ; and so, whereas usury doth but gnaw upon them, bad markets would swallow them quite up. As for mortgaging or pawning, it will little mend the matter ; for either men will not take pawns without use, or if they do, they will look precisely for the forfeiture. I remember a cruel moneyed man in the country that would say, "The devil take this usury, it keeps us from forfeitures of mortgages and bonds." The third and last is, that it is a vanity to conceive that there would be ordinary borrowing without profit ; and it is impossible to conceive the number of inconveniences that will ensue, if borrowing be cramped. Therefore to speak of the abolishing of usury is idle ; all states have ever had it in one kind or rate, or other. So as that opinion must be sent to Utopia.

To speak now of the reformation and reglement of usury, how the discommodities of it may be best avoided and the commodities retained : it appears by the balance of commodities and discommodities of usury, two things are to be reconciled.* The one, that the tooth of usury be grinded that it bite not too much ; the other, that there be left open a means to invite moneyed men to lend to the merchants, for the continuing and quickening of trade. This cannot be done except you introduce two several sorts of usury, a less and a greater. For if you reduce usury to one low rate, it will

ease the common borrower, but the merchant will be to seek for money. And it is to be noted that the trade of merchandise, being the most lucrative, may bear usury at a good rate; other contracts not so.

To serve both intentions, the way would be briefly thus: that there be two rates of usury, the one free and general for all; the other under license only to certain persons, and in certain places of merchandising. First, therefore, let usury in general be reduced to five in the hundred; and let that rate be proclaimed to be free and current; and let the state shut itself out to take any penalty for the same. This will preserve borrowing from any general stop or dryness; this will ease infinite borrowers in the country; this will in good part raise the price of land, because land purchased at sixteen years' purchase will yield six in the hundred, and somewhat more, whereas this rate of interest yields but five; this, by like reason, will encourage and edge industrious and profitable improvements, because many will rather venture in that kind than take five in the hundred, especially having been used to greater profit. Secondly, let there be certain persons licensed to lend to known merchants upon usury at a higher rate, and let it be with the cautions following. Let the rate be, even with the merchant himself, somewhat more easy than that he used formerly to pay; for by that means all borrowers shall have some ease by this reforma-

tion, be he merchant or whosoever. Let it be no bank, or common stock, but every man be master of his own money. Not that I altogether mislike banks, but they will hardly be brooked in regard of certain suspicions. Let the state be answered¹ some small matter for the license, and the rest left to the lender; for if the abatement be but small, it will no whit discourage the lender. For he, for example, that took before ten or nine in the hundred, will sooner descend to eight in the hundred than give over his trade of usury, and go from certain gains to gains of hazard. Let these licensed lenders be in number indefinite, but restrained to certain principal cities and towns of merchandising; for then they will be hardly able to color² other men's moneys in the country; so as the license of nine will not suck away the current rate of five. For no man will send his moneys far off, nor put them into unknown hands.

If it be objected that this doth in a sort authorize usury, which before was in some places but permissive; the answer is, that it is better to mitigate usury by declaration than to suffer it to rage by connivance.

¹ Paid.

² Borrow to lend again in one's own name. To *color* is to give a false appearance to.

XLII. — OF YOUTH AND AGE.

(1612; somewhat enlarged, 1625.)

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts as well as in ages. And yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old; and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely.

Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years; as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus, of the latter of whom it is said, "*Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus, plenam.*"¹ And yet he was the ablest emperor, almost, of all the list. But reposed natures may do well in youth, as it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmus Duke of Florence, Gaston de Foix, and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition for business.

Young men are fitter to invent than to judge, fitter for execution than for counsel, and fitter for

¹ Full of errors, nay, of frantic passions, was his youth.

new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them, but in new things abuseth them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, — that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles, which they have chanced upon, absurdly; care¹ not to innovate, which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and, that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them; like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success.

Certainly it is good to compound employments of both: for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both; and good for succession,² that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors; and, lastly, good for extern accidents, because authority followeth old men, and favor and

¹ Hesitate.

² The future (Latin translation).

popularity, youth. But for the moral part perhaps youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain Rabbin upon the text, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream. And certainly the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather in the powers of understanding, than in the virtues of the will and affections.

There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes. These are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned; such as was Hermogenes, the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtile, who afterwards waxed stupid. A second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions which have better grace in youth than in age; such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech, which becomes youth well, but not age. So Tully saith of Hortensius, "*Idem manebat, neque idem decebat.*"¹ The third is of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous more than tract of years can uphold; as was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy saith in effect, "*Ultima primis cedebant.*"²

¹ He remained the same, but it did not equally become him.

² The end did not match the beginning.

XLIII.—OF BEAUTY.

(1612; slightly enlarged, 1625.)

VIRTUE is like a rich stone, best plain set ; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features, and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect. Neither is it almost¹ seen that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue ; as if Nature were rather busy not to err, than in labor to produce excellency. And therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit, and study rather behavior than virtue. But this holds not always : for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward IV. of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times.

In beauty, that of favor² is more than that of color ; and that of decent and gracious motion, more than that of favor. That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express, — no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles³

¹ For the most part.² Feature.³ Not Apelles, but Zeuxis.

or Albert Dürer were the more trifler ; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions ; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them. Not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was ; but he must do it by a kind of felicity, as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music, and not by rule. A man shall see faces that, if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good, and yet altogether do well.

If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable : “*Pulchrorum autumnus pulcher ;*”¹ for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt and cannot last ; and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance ; but yet certainly, again, if it light well, it maketh virtues shine and vices blush.

¹ Beautiful is the autumn of beauty.

XLIV.—OF DEFORMITY.

(1612 ; last sentence altered, 1625.)

DEFORMED persons are commonly even with Nature ; for as Nature hath done ill by them, so do they by Nature, being for the most part, as the Scripture saith, “void of natural affection ;” and so they have their revenge of Nature. Certainly there is a consent between the body and the mind, and where Nature erreth in the one she ventureth in the other : “Ubi peccat in uno, periclitatur in altero.” But because there is in man an election touching the frame of his mind, and a necessity in the frame of his body, the stars of natural inclination are sometimes obscured by the sun of discipline and virtue. Therefore it is good to consider of deformity, not as a sign, which is more deceivable ; but as a cause which seldom faileth of the effect.

Whosoever hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn. Therefore all deformed persons are extreme bold : first, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn ; but in process of time, by a general habit. Also it stirreth in them industry, and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the

weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay. Again, in their superiors it quencheth jealousy towards them, as persons that they think they may at pleasure despise ; and it layeth their competitors and emulators asleep, as never believing they should be in possibility of advancement, till they see them in possession. So that, upon the matter,¹ in a great wit deformity is an advantage to rising.

Kings in ancient times, and at this present in some countries, were wont to put great trust in eunuchs ; because they that are envious towards all, are more obnoxious² and officious towards one. But yet their trust towards them hath rather been as to good spials and good whisperers than good magistrates and officers. And much like is the reason of deformed persons. Still the ground is, they will, if they be of spirit, seek to free themselves from scorn ; which must be either by virtue or malice. And, therefore, let it not be marvelled if sometimes they prove excellent persons, as was Agesilaus, Zanger the son of Solyman, Æsop, Gasca President of Peru ; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them, with others.³

¹ On the whole (in ed. 1612: "upon the whole matter").

² Compliant. See note 1, Essay xx. page 123.

³ In the edition of 1612, this sentence was a clause, as follows: "and therefore they prove either the best of men, or the worst, or strangely mixed."

XLV.—OF BUILDING.

(1625.)

HOUSES are built to live in, and not to look on ; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets, who build them with small cost. He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat, committeth himself to prison. Neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome, but likewise where the air is unequal ; as you shall see many fine seats, set upon a knap¹ of ground, environed with higher hills round about it ; whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs, so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat, but ill ways, ill markets, and, if you will consult with Momus,² ill neighbors. I speak not of many more : want of water ; want of wood, shade, and shelter ; want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures ; want of prospect ; want of level grounds ;

¹ Knob, knoll.

² Who thought a house should be built upon wheels to remove it from ill neighbors.

want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, too remote; having no commodity¹ of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far off from great cities, which may hinder business; or too near them, which lurcheth² all provisions, and maketh everything dear; where a man hath a great living laid together, and where he is scanted;—all which, as it is impossible, perhaps, to find together, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may take as many as he can; and if he have several dwellings, that he sort them so, that what he wanteth in the one he may find in the other. Lucullus answered Pompey well, who, when he saw his stately galleries, and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said, “Surely an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?” Lucullus answered, “Why, do you not think me as wise as some fowl are, that ever change their abode towards the winter?”

To pass from the seat to the house itself, we will do as Cicero doth in the orator’s art, who writes books “*De Oratore*,” and a book he entitles “*Orator* :” whereof the former delivers the precepts of the art, and the latter the perfection. We will therefore describe a princely palace, making a

¹ Advantage. Latin, *nulla commoditas*. All the English editions misprint, and make nonsense of, this passage.

² Snaps up, consumes.

brief model thereof. For it is strange to see, now in Europe, such huge buildings as the Vatican and Escorial and some others be, and yet scarce a very fair room in them.

First, therefore, I say, you cannot have a perfect palace, except you have two several sides : a side for the banquet, as is spoken of in the book of Hester ; and a side for the household, — the one for feasts and triumphs, and the other for dwelling. I understand both these sides to be not only returns,¹ but parts of the front ; and to be uniform without, though severally partitioned within ; and to be on both sides of a great and stately tower, in the midst of the front, that as it were joineth them together on either hand. I would have on the side of the banquet, in front, one only goodly room above stairs, of some forty foot high ; and under it a room for a dressing or preparing place, at times of triumphs. On the other side, which is the household side, I wish it divided at the first into a hall and a chapel, with a partition between, both of good state and bigness ; and those not to go all the length, but to have at the farther end a winter and a summer parlor, both fair. And under these rooms a fair and large cellar sunk under ground ; and likewise some privy kitchens, with butteries and pantries, and the like. As for the tower, I would have it two stories of eighteen foot high

¹ Sides of the court.

apiece, above the two wings ; and a goodly leads upon the top, railed, with statuas interposed ; and the same tower to be divided into rooms, as shall be thought fit. The stairs likewise to the upper rooms, let them be upon a fair open newel,¹ and finely railed in with images of wood cast into a brass color ; and a very fair landing-place at the top. But this to be, if you do not point any of the lower rooms for a dining-place of servants ; for otherwise you shall have the servants' dinner after your own, for the steam of it will come up as in a tunnel. And so much for the front. Only I understand the height of the first stairs to be sixteen foot, which is the height of the lower room.

Beyond this front is there to be a fair court, but three sides of it of a far lower building than the front. And in all the four corners of that court, fair staircases cast into turrets on the outside, and not within the row of buildings themselves ; but those towers are not to be of the height of the front, but rather proportionable to the lower building. Let the court not be paved, for that striketh up a great heat in summer, and much cold in winter ; but only some side alleys, with a cross, and the quarters to graze,² being kept shorn, but not too near shorn. The row of return on the banquet side, let it be all stately galleries ; in which

¹ The hollow column around which winds a spiral staircase.

² To be turfed.

galleries let there be three, or five, fine cupolas in the length of it, placed at equal distance, and fine colored windows of several works. On the household side, chambers of presence and ordinary entertainments, with some bed-chambers ; and let all three sides be a double house, without through lights on the sides, that you may have rooms from the sun, both for forenoon and afternoon. Cast it also that you may have rooms both for summer and winter ; shady for summer, and warm for winter. You shall have sometimes fair houses so full of glass, that one cannot tell where to become¹ to be out of the sun or cold. For imbowed windows I hold them of good use (in cities, indeed, upright do better, in respect of the uniformity towards the street), for they be pretty retiring places for conference ; and besides, they keep both the wind and sun off, for that which would strike almost through the room doth scarce pass the window. But let them be but few, four in the court, on the sides only.

Beyond this court let there be an inward court, of the same square and height, which is to be environed with the garden on all sides ; and in the inside cloistered on all sides upon decent and beautiful arches, as high as the first story. On the under story, towards the garden,² let it be turned to a grotto, or place of shade or estivation,

¹ To betake one's self.

² "So far as concerns the two sides" (supplied in the Latin translation).

and only have opening and windows towards the garden ; and be level upon the floor, no whit sunk under ground, to avoid all dampishness. And let there be a fountain, or some fair work of statuas, in the midst of this court, and to be paved as the other court was. These buildings to be for privy lodgings on both sides, and the end for privy galleries ; whereof you must foresee, that one of them be for an infirmary, if the prince or any special person should be sick, with chambers, bed-chamber, antecamera, and recamera,¹ joining to it. This upon the second story. Upon the ground-story,² a fair gallery, open, upon pillars ; and upon the third story,³ likewise, an open gallery upon pillars, to take the prospect and freshness of the garden. At both corners of the further side,⁴ by way of return,⁵ let there be two delicate or rich cabinets, daintily paved, richly hanged, glazed with crystalline glass, and a rich cupola in the midst ; and all other elegancy that may be thought upon. In the upper gallery, too, I wish that there may be, if the place will yield it, some fountains running in divers places from the wall, with some fine avoidances.⁶ And thus much for the model of the palace, save that you must have, before you come

¹ Retiring chamber.

² "At the end" (Latin translation).

³ "On all three sides" (id.).

⁴ "On the second story" (id.).

⁵ See note, page 220.

⁶ Outlets.

to the front, three courts: a green court plain, with a wall about it; a second court of the same,¹ but more garnished, with little turrets, or rather embellishments, upon the wall; and a third court, to make a square with the front, but not to be built, nor yet enclosed with a naked wall, but enclosed with terraces, leaded aloft, and fairly garnished, on the three sides; and cloistered on the inside with pillars, and not with arches below. As for offices, let them stand at distance, with some low galleries to pass from them to the palace itself.

XLVI. — OF GARDENS.

(1625.)

GOD Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks; and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it, in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year; in which, severally, things of beauty may be then

¹ "Same size" (Latin translation).

in season. For December and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter: holly, ivy, bays, juniper, cypress-trees, yew, pine-apple trees,¹ fir-trees, rosemary, lavender, periwinkle (the white, the purple, and the blue), germander, flags, orange-trees, lemon-trees, and myrtles (if they be stoved²), and sweet marjoram, warm set. There followeth for the latter part of January and February, the mezerion-tree, which then blossoms; crocus vernus, both the yellow and the gray; primroses, anemones, the early tulip, hyacinthus orientalis, chamaëris, fritellaria. For March, there come violets, specially the single blue, which are the earliest; the yellow daffodil, the daisy, the almond-tree in blossom, the peach-tree in blossom, the cornelian-tree in blossom, sweet-briar. In April follow the double white violet, the wallflower, the stock-gilliflower, the cowslip, flower-de-luces and lilies of all natures, rosemary-flowers, the tulip, the double peony, the pale daffodil, the French honeysuckle, the cherry-tree in blossom, the damascene and plum-trees in blossom, the whitethorn in leaf, the lilac-tree. In May and June come pinks of all sorts, specially the blush pink; roses of all kinds except the musk, which comes later; honeysuckles, strawberries, bugloss, columbine, the French marigold, flos Africanus, cherry-tree in fruit, ribes,³ figs in fruit, rasps,

¹ Pines.² Kept warm.³ Red currants (*Ribes rubrum*).

vine-flowers, lavender in flowers, the sweet satyrian¹ with the white flower, herba muscaria, liliū convallium, the apple-tree in blossom. In July come gilliflowers of all varieties, musk-roses, the lime-tree in blossom, early pears and plums in fruit, jennetings, codlings. In August come plums of all sorts in fruit, pears, apricocks, barberries, filberds, musk-melons, monkshoods of all colors. In September come grapes, apples, poppies of all colors, peaches, melocotones,² nectarines, cornelians, wardens, quinces. In October, and the beginning of November, come services, medlars, bullaces, roses cut or removed to come late, hollyhocks, and such like. These particulars are for the climate of London; but my meaning is perceived, that you may have *ver perpetuum* as the place affords.³

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast flowers of their smells, so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness; yea, though it be in a morning's dew. Bays likewise

¹ Orchis.

² A variety of large peach.

³ In some copies of the original edition this sentence reads: "Thus, if you will, you may have the Golden Age again, and a spring all the year long."

yield no smell as they grow ; rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram. That which, above all others, yields the sweetest smell in the air is the violet, specially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April, and about Bartholomew-tide. Next to that is the musk-rose ; then the strawberry leaves dying, with ¹ a most excellent cordial smell ; then the flower of the vines, — it is a little dust, like the dust of a bent, ² which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth ; then sweet-briar ; then wallflowers, which are very delightful to be set under a parlor or lower chamber window ; then pinks and gilliflowers, specially the matted pink and clove-gilliflower ; then the flowers of the lime-tree ; then the honeysuckles, so they be somewhat afar off. Of bean-flowers I speak not, because they are field flowers. But those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three : that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints ; therefore you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread.

For gardens (speaking of those which are indeed prince-like, as we have done of buildings), the contents ought not well to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts : a green in the entrance, a heath or desert

¹ In original *which*. Corrected to *with* in edition of 1639.

² Plantain-stalk.

in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides. And I like well that four acres of ground be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and four to either side, and twelve to the main garden. The green hath two pleasures: the one, because nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn; the other, because it will give you a fair alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a stately hedge, which is to enclose the garden. But because the alley will be long, and, in great heat of the year or day, you ought not to buy the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green, therefore you are, of either side the green, to plant a covert alley upon carpenter's work, about twelve foot in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden. As for the making of knots or figures with divers colored earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side which the garden stands, they be but toys: you may see as good sights many times in tarts. The garden is best to be square, encompassed on all the four sides with a stately arched hedge; the arches to be upon pillars of carpenter's work of some ten foot high, and six foot broad, and the spaces between of the same dimension with the breadth of the arch. Over the arches let there be an entire hedge of some four foot high, framed also upon carpenter's work; and upon the upper hedge, over every arch, a little turret with a

belly, enough to receive a cage of birds ; and over every space between the arches some other little figure, with broad plates of round colored glass, gilt for the sun to play upon. But this hedge I intend to be raised upon a bank, not steep but gently slope, of some six foot, set all with flowers. Also, I understand that this square of the garden should not be the whole breadth of the ground, but to leave on either side ground enough for diversity of side alleys, unto which the two covert alleys of the green may deliver you. But there must be no alleys with hedges at either end of this great enclosure : not at the hither end, for letting¹ your prospect upon this fair hedge from the green ; nor at the further end, for letting your prospect from the hedge, through the arches, upon the heath.

For the ordering of the ground within the great hedge, I leave it to variety of device ; advising, nevertheless, that whatsoever form you cast it into, first it be not too busy² or full of work. Wherein I, for my part, do not like images cut out in juniper or other garden stuff, —they be for children. Little low hedges round like welts,³ with some pretty pyramids, I like well ; and in some places, fair columns upon frames of carpenter's work. I would also have the alleys spacious and fair. You may have closer alleys upon the side grounds, but none in the main garden. I wish also, in the very

¹ For fear of intercepting. ² Curious, fussy.

³ Borders, edging.

middle, a fair mount, with three ascents and alleys, enough for four to walk abreast ; which I would have to be perfect circles without any bulwarks or embossments ; and the whole mount to be thirty foot high ; and some fine banqueting house, with some chimneys ¹ neatly cast, and without too much glass.

For fountains, they are a great beauty and refreshment ; but pools mar all, and make the garden unwholesome, and full of flies and frogs. Fountains I intend to be of two natures : the one that sprinkleth or spouteth water ; the other a fair receipt of water of some thirty or forty foot square, but without fish, or slime, or mud. For the first, the ornaments of images gilt, or of marble, which are in use, do well ; but the main matter is so to convey the water as it never stay either in the bowls or in the cistern, that the water be never by rest discolored green or red, or the like, or gather any mossiness or putrefaction. Besides that, it is to be cleansed every day by the hand. Also some steps up to it, and some fine pavement about it, doth well. As for the other kind of fountain, which we may call a bathing pool, it may admit much curiosity and beauty, wherewith we will not trouble ourselves : as that the bottom be finely paved, and with images ; the sides likewise ; and withal embellished with colored glass, and such things of lustre ; encompassed also with fine rails

¹ Fireplaces.

of low statuas. But the main point is the same which we mentioned in the former kind of fountain : which is, that the water be in perpetual motion, fed by a water higher than the pool, and delivered into it by fair spouts, and then discharged away underground by some equality of bores¹ that it stay little. And for fine devices of arching water without spilling, and making it rise in several forms (of feathers, drinking glasses, canopies, and the like), they be pretty things to look on, but nothing to health and sweetness.

For the heath, which was the third part of our plot, I wish it to be framed, as much as may be, to a natural wildness. Trees, I would have none in it, but some thickets made only of sweet-briar and honeysuckle, and some wild vine amongst ; and the ground set with violets, strawberries, and primroses, for these are sweet and prosper in the shade ; and these to be in the heath here and there, not in any order. I like also little heaps in the nature of mole-hills, such as are in wild heaths, to be set, some with wild thyme, some with pinks, some with germander, that gives a good flower to the eye, some with periwinkle, some with violets, some with strawberries, some with cowslips, some with daisies, some with red roses, some with lilium convallium, some with sweet williams red, some with bear's foot, and the like low flowers, being

¹ Tubes equal in bore to the "fair spouts."

withal sweet and sightly. Part of which heaps to be with standards of little bushes pricked¹ upon their top, and part without. The standards to be roses, juniper, holly, barberries (but here and there, because of the smell of their blossom), red currants, gooseberries, rosemary, bays, sweet-briar, and such like; but these standards to be kept with cutting that they grow not out of course.

For the side grounds, you are to fill them with variety of alleys private, to give a full shade, some of them, wheresoever the sun be. You are to frame some of them likewise for shelter, that when the wind blows sharp you may walk as in a gallery. And those alleys must be likewise hedged at both ends to keep out the wind, and these closer alleys must be ever finely gravelled, and no grass, because of going wet. In many of these alleys, likewise, you are to set fruit trees of all sorts, as well upon the walls as in ranges. And this would² be generally observed, that the borders wherein you plant your fruit trees be fair and large, and low, and not steep; and set with fine flowers, but thin and sparingly, lest they deceive³ the trees. At the end of both the side grounds I would have a mount of some pretty height; leaving the wall of the enclosure breast high, to look abroad into the fields.

¹ Set, planted.

² Requires to. See note 1, Essay xxii. page 128.

³ Defraud.

For the main garden, I do not deny but there should be some fair alleys, ranged on both sides with fruit trees, and some pretty tufts of fruit trees, and arbors with seats set in some decent order; but these to be by no means set too thick, but to leave the main garden so as it be not close, but the air open and free. For as for shade, I would have you rest¹ upon the alleys of the side grounds, there to walk, if you be disposed, in the heat of the year or day; but to make account that the main garden is for the more temperate parts of the year, and in the heat of summer for the morning and the evening, or overcast days.

For aviaries, I like them not, except they be of that largeness as they may be turfed, and have living plants and bushes set in them, that the birds may have more scope and natural nestling, and that no foulness appear in the floor of the aviary.

So I have made a platform of a princely garden, partly by precept, partly by drawing, not a model, but some general lines of it; and in this I have spared for no cost. But it is nothing for great princes, that for the most part taking advice with workmen, with no less cost set their things together; and sometimes add statuas and such things for state and magnificence, but nothing to the true pleasure of a garden.

¹ Depend.

XLVII. — OF NEGOTIATING.¹

(1597; enlarged, 1612; again, 1625.)

It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter, and by the mediation of a third than by a man's self. Letters are good when a man would draw an answer by letter back again; or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter; or where it may be danger to be interrupted or heard by pieces. To deal in person is good when a man's face breedeth regard, as commonly with inferiors; or in tender cases, where a man's eye upon the countenance of him with whom he speaketh may give him a direction how far to go; and generally where a man will reserve to himself liberty, either to disavow or to expound.

In choice of instruments it is better to choose men of a plainer sort, that are like to do that that is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success,² than those that are cunning to contrive out of other men's business somewhat to grace themselves, and will help the matter in report for satisfaction sake.³ Use also such per-

¹ See note on "practice," page 235. ² Result.

³ "Smooth their news with fair words to give the more satisfaction" (Latin translation).

sons as affect¹ the business wherein they are employed, for that quickeneth much; and such as are fit for the matter: as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, crafty men for inquiry and observation, froward and absurd men for business that doth not well bear out itself.² Use also such as have been lucky and prevailed before in things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their prescription.

It is better to sound a person with whom one deals, afar off, than to fall upon the point at first; except you mean to surprise him by some short question. It is better dealing with men in appetite, than with those that are where they would be. If a man deal with another upon conditions, the start or first performance is all; which a man cannot reasonably demand, except either the nature of the thing be such which must go before; or else a man can persuade the other party that he shall still need him in some other thing; or else that he be counted the honester man.³

All practice⁴ is to discover or to work. Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at un-

¹ Like. See note 1, Essay i. page 39.

² "That has any unfairness in it" (Latin translation).

³ "Or, again, if A has the reputation of being superior to B in honesty, A may fairly ask B to undertake the 'first performance'" (Abbott).

⁴ Artful dealing. This essay might almost have been entitled, "Of Practice."

awares ; and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done, and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him ; or his ends, and so persuade him ; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him ; or those that have interest in him, and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends to interpret their speeches ; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty a man may not look to sow and reap at once, but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

XLVIII. — OF FOLLOWERS AND FRIENDS.

(1597 ; slightly enlarged, 1612 ; still more, 1625.)

COSTLY followers are not to be liked ; lest while a man maketh his train longer he maketh his wings shorter. I reckon to be costly not them alone which charge the purse, but which are wearisome and importune in suits. Ordinary followers ought to challenge no higher conditions than countenance, recommendation, and protection from wrongs. Factious followers are worse to be liked, which follow not upon affection to him with whom they range themselves, but upon discontentment con-

ceived against some other ; whereupon commonly ensueth that ill intelligence that we may many times see between great personages. Likewise glorious¹ followers, who make themselves as trumpets of the commendation of those they follow, are full of inconvenience ; for they taint business through want of secrecy, and they export honor from a man, and make him a return in envy. There is a kind of followers likewise which are dangerous, being indeed espials, which inquire the secrets of the house, and bear tales of them to others. Yet such men many times are in great favor, for they are officious, and commonly exchange tales.

The following by certain estates of men answerable to that which a great person himself professeth (as of soldiers to him that hath been employed in the wars, and the like) hath ever been a thing civil, and well taken even in monarchies, so it be without too much pomp or popularity. But the most honorable kind of following is, to be followed as one that apprehendeth to advance virtue and desert in all sorts of persons. And yet where there is no eminent odds in sufficiency, it is better to take with the more passable² than with the more

¹ Vain-glorious. See Essay liv. *passim*.

² To take (up) with "the more commonplace man" (Latin translation). But *passable* probably means acceptable or *suitable* : the one who best *passes muster* in practice. See note, Essay li. page 245.

able. And besides, to speak truth, in base times active men are of more use than virtuous.¹ It is true that in government it is good to use men of one rank equally : for to countenance some extraordinarily is to make them insolent and the rest discontent, because they may claim a due. But contrariwise, in favor, to use men with much difference and election is good : for it maketh the persons preferred more thankful, and the rest more officious ; because all is of favor.

It is good discretion not to make too much of any man at the first, because one cannot hold out that proportion. To be governed, as we call it, by one is not safe, for it shows softness, and gives a freedom to scandal and disreputation ; for those that would not censure or speak ill of a man immediately, will talk more boldly of those that are so great with them,² and thereby wound their² honor. Yet to be distracted with many is worse, for it makes men to be of the last impression and full of change. To take advice of some few friends is ever honorable, "for lookers-on many times see more than gamesters, and the vale best discovereth the hill." There is little friendship in the world, and least of all between equals, which was wont to be magnified. That that is, is between superior and inferior, whose fortunes may comprehend the one the other.

¹ Able. See note 2, Essay xiv. page 89.

² *Them . . . their*, refer to a man.

XLIX. — OF SUITORS.

(1597 ; enlarged, 1612 ; again, 1625.)

MANY ill matters and projects are undertaken, and private suits do putrefy the public good. Many good matters are undertaken with bad minds : I mean not only corrupt minds, but crafty minds, that intend not performance. Some embrace suits, which never mean to deal effectually in them ; but if they see there may be life in the matter by some other mean, they will be content to win a thank or take a second reward, or at least to make use in the mean time of the suitor's hopes. Some take hold of suits only for an occasion to cross some other ; or to make an information whereof they could not otherwise have apt pretext, without care what become of the suit when that turn is served ; or, generally, to make other men's business a kind of entertainment¹ to bring in their own. Nay, some undertake suits with a full purpose to let them fall, to the end to gratify the adverse party or competitor.

Surely there is in some sort a right in every suit : either a right of equity, if it be a suit of controversy ; or a right of desert, if it be a suit of peti-

¹ Diversion.

tion. If affection lead a man to favor the wrong side in justice, let him rather use his countenance to compound the matter than to carry it. If affection lead a man to favor the less worthy in desert, let him do it without depraving¹ or disabling the better deserver. In suits which a man doth not well understand, it is good to refer them to some friend of trust and judgment, that may report whether he may deal in them with honor; but let him choose well his referendaries,² for else he may be led by the nose.

Suitors are so distasted with delays and abuses, that plain dealing in denying to deal in suits at first and reporting the success³ barely, and in challenging no more thanks than one hath deserved, is grown not only honorable, but also gracious. In suits of favor the first coming ought to take little place; so far forth consideration may be had of his trust,⁴ that if intelligence of the matter could not otherwise have been had but by him, advantage be not taken of the note,⁵ but the party left to his other means, and in some sort recompensed for his discovery.⁶ To be ignorant of the value of a suit is simplicity, as well as to be ignorant of the right thereof is want of conscience.

Secrecy in suits is a great mean of obtaining; for voicing them to be in forwardness may discour-

¹ Disparaging.

² Referees.

³ Outcome.

⁴ The first suitor's trust in you.

⁵ Information.

⁶ Disclosure.

age some kind of suitors, but doth quicken and awake others. But timing of the suit is the principal. Timing, I say, not only in respect of the person that should grant it, but in respect of those which are like to cross it. Let a man, in the choice of his mean, rather choose the fittest mean than the greatest mean ; and rather them that lead in certain things than those that are general.¹

The reparation of a denial is sometimes equal to the first grant, if a man show himself neither dejected nor discontented. "*Iniquum petas, ut æquum feras*"² is a good rule where a man hath strength of favor ; but otherwise a man were better rise in his suit, for he that would have ventured at first to have lost the suitor, will not, in the conclusion, lose both the suitor and his own former favor.

Nothing is thought so easy a request to a great person as his letter ; and yet if it be not in a good cause, it is so much out of his reputation.

There are no worse instruments than these general contrivers of suits : for they are but a kind of poison and infection to public proceedings.

¹ Specialists rather than Jacks of all trades.

² Ask for more than is just, in order that you may get as much as is just.

L. — OF STUDIES.

(1597 ; enlarged, 1612 ; again, 1625.)

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring ; for ornament is in discourse, and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one ; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth, to use them too much for ornament is affectation, to make judgment only by their rules is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience. For natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study ; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them ; for they teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation.

Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some

few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy¹ things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not.

Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtile, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend. "Abesunt studia in mores."² Nay, there is no stond³ or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies, like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for

¹ Insipid.

² Bacon elsewhere paraphrases this: "Studies have an influence and operation upon the manners of those that are conversant in them."

³ Stand. Explained by the next word. See note 3, Essay xl. page 203.

the head, and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics ; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *cymini sectores*.¹ If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

LI. — OF FACTION.

(1597 ; slightly enlarged, 1612 ; considerably, 1625.)

MANY have an opinion not wise, that for a prince to govern his estate, or for a great person to govern his proceedings, according to the respect of factions, is a principal part of policy ; whereas, contrariwise, the chiefest wisdom is, either in ordering those things which are general, and wherein men of several factions do nevertheless agree ; or in dealing with correspondence to particular persons, one by one. But I say not that the consideration of factions is to be neglected.

Mean men, in their rising, must adhere ;² but great men, that have strength in themselves, were

¹ Splitters of cummin-seeds.

² Stick by.

better to maintain themselves indifferent and neutral. Yet even in beginners, to adhere so moderately, as he be a man of the one faction which is most passable with the other, commonly giveth best way.¹ The lower and weaker faction is the firmer in conjunction ; and it is often seen that a few that are stiff do tire out a greater number that are more moderate.

When one of the factions is extinguished, the remaining subdivideth : as the faction between Lucullus and the rest of the nobles of the Senate (which they called *Optimates*) held out awhile against the faction of Pompey and Cæsar ; but when the Senate's authority was pulled down, Cæsar and Pompey soon after brake. The faction or party of Antonius and Octavianus Cæsar, against Brutus and Cassius, held out likewise for a time ; but when Brutus and Cassius were overthrown, then soon after Antonius and Octavianus brake and subdivided. These examples are of wars, but the same holdeth in private factions. And therefore those that are seconds in factions, do many times, when the faction subdivideth, prove principals ; but many times also they prove ciphers and cashiered ; for many a man's strength is in opposition, and when that faileth he groweth out of use.

It is commonly seen that men once placed, take

¹ You will best make your way by being, in your party, the man most acceptable to the opposite party. For *passable* compare note 2, Essay xlviii. page 237.

in with ¹ the contrary faction to that by which they enter: thinking belike that they have the first sure, and now are ready for a new purchase. The traitor in faction lightly goeth away with it: for when matters have stuck long in balancing, the winning of some one man casteth them, and he getteth all the thanks.² The even carriage between two factions proceedeth not always of moderation, but of a trueness to a man's self,³ with end to make use of both. Certainly in Italy they hold it a little suspect in popes, when they have often in their mouth "Padre commune,"⁴ and take it to be a sign of one that meaneth to refer all to the greatness of his own house.

Kings had need beware how they side themselves,⁵ and make themselves as of a faction or party; for leagues within the state are ever pernicious to monarchies: for they raise an obligation paramount to obligation of sovereignty, and make the king "tanquam unus ex nobis,"⁶ as was to be seen in the league of France. When factions are carried too high and too violently, it is a sign of weakness in princes, and much to the prejudice both of their authority and business. The motions

¹ Compare our *take up with*.

² The trimmer gives the casting vote.

³ "He's ben true to *one* party, — an' thet is himself."

— Hosea Biglow.

⁴ The common father.

⁵ Take sides. Compare "adhere," note 2, page 244.

⁶ As one of us.

of factions under kings ought to be like the motions (as the astronomers speak) of the inferior orbs ; which may have their proper motions, but yet still are quietly carried by the higher motion of *primum mobile*.¹

LII. — OF CEREMONIES AND RESPECTS.

(1597 ; enlarged, 1612 ; again, 1625.)

HE that is only real had need have exceeding great parts of virtue, as the stone had need to be rich that is set without foil. But if a man mark it well, it is in praise and commendation of men, as it is in gettings and gains. For the proverb is true, that "light gains make heavy purses ;" for light gains come thick, whereas great come but now and then. So it is true, that small matters win great commendation, because they are continually in use and in note ; whereas the occasion of any great virtue cometh but on festivals. Therefore it doth much add to a man's reputation, and is, as Queen Isabella said, "like perpetual letters commendatory," to have good forms.

To attain them, it almost sufficeth not to despise them : for so shall a man observe them in others ; and let him trust himself with the rest. For if he labor too much to express them, he shall lose their

¹ The Prime Orb. See note 1, Essay xv. pag

grace, which is to be natural and unaffected. Some men's behavior is like a verse, wherein every syllable is measured. How can a man comprehend great matters that breaketh his mind too much to small observations?

Not to use ceremonies at all, is to teach others not to use them again, and so diminisheth respect to himself; especially they be not to be omitted to strangers and formal natures: but the dwelling upon them, and exalting them above the moon, is not only tedious, but doth diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks. And certainly there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting passages amongst compliments, which is of singular use, if a man can hit upon it.

Amongst a man's peers, a man shall be sure of familiarity; and therefore it is good a little to keep state. Amongst a man's inferiors one shall be sure of reverence; and therefore it is good a little to be familiar. He that is too much in anything, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply one's self to others is good; so it be with demonstration that a man doth it upon regard, and not upon facility.¹ It is a good precept, generally, in seconding another, yet to add somewhat of one's own: as, if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be

¹ Over-anxiety to please. Compare "facility or softness," note, Essay xiii. page 85.

with condition ; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging further reason.

Men had need beware how they be too perfect in compliments ; for be they never so sufficient otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute, to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss also in business to be too full of respects, or to be too curious in observing times and opportunities. Solomon saith, "He that considereth the wind shall not sow ; and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap." A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behavior should be like their apparel ; not too strait or point device,¹ but free for exercise or motion.

LIII. — OF PRAISE.

(1612 ; enlarged, 1625.)

PRAISE is the reflection of virtue : but it is as the glass or body which giveth the reflection. If it be from the common people it is commonly false and naught, and rather followeth vain persons than virtuous : for the common people understand not many excellent virtues. The lowest virtues draw praise from them ; the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration ; but of the

¹ Precise.

high speculations. St. Paul, when he boasts of himself, he doth oft interlace, "I speak like a fool;" but speaking of his calling he saith, "*Magnificabo apostolatum meum.*"¹

LIV. — OF VAIN-GLORY.

(1612; enlarged, 1625.)

It was prettily devised of Æsop: "The fly sat upon the axle-tree of the chariot-wheel, and said, 'What a dust do I raise!'" So are there some vain persons that, whatsoever goeth alone, or moveth upon greater means, if they have never so little hand in it, they think it is they that carry it. They that are glorious must needs be factious; for all bravery² stands upon comparisons. They must needs be violent to make good their own vaunts. Neither can they be secret, and, therefore, not effectual;³ but, according to the French proverb, "*Beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit*": Much bruit, little fruit.

Yet, certainly, there is use of this quality in civil affairs: where there is an opinion and fame to be created, either of virtue or greatness, these men are good trumpeters. Again, as Titus Livius noteth in the case of Antiochus and the Ætolians,

¹ I will magnify mine office.

² Bragging, swagger, bravado.

³ They cannot be effective. "They taint business through want of secrecy." — Essay xlviii. page 237.

there are sometimes great effects of cross lies ; as if a man that negotiates between two princes, to draw them to join in a war against the third, doth extol the forces of either of them above measure, the one to the other. And sometimes he that deals between man and man raiseth his own credit with both, by pretending greater interest than he hath in either. And in these and the like kinds it often falls out that somewhat is produced of nothing ; for lies are sufficient to breed opinion, and opinion brings on substance.

In military commanders and soldiers vain-glory is an essential point ; for as iron sharpens iron, so by glory one courage sharpeneth another. In cases of great enterprise upon charge and adventure, a composition of glorious natures doth put life into business ; and those that are of solid and sober natures have more of the ballast than of the sail. In fame of learning the flight will be slow, without some feathers of ostentation. “*Qui de contemnenda gloria libros scribunt, nomen suum inscribunt.*”¹ Socrates, Aristotle, Galen, were men full of ostentation. Certainly vain-glory helpeth to perpetuate a man’s memory ; and virtue was never so beholding² to human nature as it received his due at the second hand. Neither had the fame of Cicero, Seneca, Plinius Secundus, borne her age

¹ Those who write books about despising glory, put their names upon the titlepages.

² Beholden.

so well, if it had not been joined with some vanity in themselves, — like unto varnish, that makes ceilings not only shine, but last.

But all this while, when I speak of vain-glory, I mean not of that property that Tacitus doth attribute to Mucianus, “*Omnium, quæ dixerat, feceratque, arte quadam ostentator* :”¹ for that proceeds not of vanity, but of natural magnanimity and discretion, and in some persons is not only comely, but gracious. For excusations, cessions,² modesty itself well governed, are but arts of ostentation. And amongst those arts there is none better than that which Plinius Secundus speaketh of: which is, to be liberal of praise and commendation to others in that wherein a man's self hath any perfection. For, saith Pliny, very wittily, “in commending another, you do yourself right; for he that you commend is either superior to you in that you commend, or inferior. If he be inferior, if he be to be commended, you much more. If he be superior, if he be not to be commended, you much less.”

Glorious men are the scorn of wise men; the admiration of fools; the idols of parasites; and the slaves of their own vaunts.

¹ “In all that he did and said he had the art of displaying himself to advantage” (Bacon's translation in the “*Advancement of Learning*”).

² Concessions.

LV. — OF HONOR AND REPUTATION.

(1597 ; re-written and enlarged, 1625.)

THE winning of honor is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth without disadvantage. For some in their actions do woo and affect¹ honor and reputation ; which sort of men are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired. And some, contrariwise, darken their virtue in the show of it, so as they be undervalued in opinion.

If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before ; or attempted and given over ; or hath been achieved, but not with so good circumstance ; he shall purchase more honor than by effecting a matter of greater difficulty or virtue, wherein he is but a follower. If a man so temper his actions, as in some one of them he doth content every faction or combination of people, the music will be the fuller. A man is an ill husband of his honor that entereth into any action, the failing wherein may disgrace him more than the carrying of it through can honor him. Honor that is gained and broken upon another hath the quickest reflection, like diamonds cut with facets. And, therefore, let a man contend to excel any competitors of his in honor, in outshooting them if

¹ Aim at. Note 1, Essay i. page 39.

he can, in their own bow. Discreet followers and servants help much to reputation : " Omnis fama a domesticis emanat." ¹ Envy, which is the canker of honor, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends rather to seek merit than fame ; and by attributing a man's successes rather to divine providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy.

The true marshalling of the degrees of sovereign honor are these : — In the first place are *conditores imperiorum*, founders of states and commonwealths ; such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman, Ismael. In the second place are *legislatores*, lawgivers, which are also called second founders, or *perpetui principes*, because they govern by their ordinances after they are gone. Such were Lycurgus, Solon, Justinian, Eadgar, Alphonsus of Castile, the Wise, that made the *Siete Partidas*.² In the third place are *liberatores*, or *salvatores*,³ such as compound the long miseries of civil wars, or deliver their countries from servitude of strangers or tyrants ; as Augustus Cæsar, Vespasianus, Aurelianus, Theodoricus, King Henry the Seventh of England, King Henry the Fourth of France. In the fourth place are *propagatores*, or *propugnatores imperii*,⁴ such as in honorable wars enlarge their

¹ All fame proceeds from servants.

² " The Seven Parts," a digest of the laws of Spain.

³ Liberators or saviours.

⁴ Extenders or defenders of empire.

territories, or make noble defence against invaders. And in the last place are *patres patriæ*,¹ which reign justly and make the times good wherein they live. Both which last kinds need no examples, they are in such number.

Degrees of honor in subjects are : — First, *participes curarum*,² those upon whom princes do discharge the greatest weight of their affairs ; their right hands, as we call them. The next are *duces belli*, great leaders ; such as are princes' lieutenants, and do them notable services in the wars. The third are *gratiosi*, favorites ; such as exceed not this scantling, to be solace to the sovereign and harmless to the people. And the fourth, *negotiiis pares* ;³ such as have great places under princes, and execute their places with sufficiency. There is an honor, likewise, which may be ranked amongst the greatest, which happeneth rarely : that is of such as sacrifice themselves to death or danger for the good of their country ; as was M. Regulus and the two Decii.

¹ Fathers of their country.

² Partners in cares.

³ Men capable in affairs.

LVI. — OF JUDICATURE.

(1612; re-written and enlarged, 1625.)

JUDGES ought to remember that their office is *jus dicere* and not *jus dare*: to interpret law, and not to make law or give law. Else will it be like the authority claimed by the Church of Rome, which, under pretext of exposition of Scripture, doth not stick to add and alter; and to pronounce that which they do not find; and by show of antiquity to introduce novelty. Judges ought to be more learned than witty, more reverend than plausible, and more advised than confident. Above all things, integrity is their portion and proper virtue. "Cursed," saith the law, "is he that removeth the landmark." The mislayer of a mere-stone¹ is to blame; but it is the unjust judge that is the capital remover of landmarks, when he defineth amiss of lands and property. One foul sentence doth more hurt than many foul examples; for these do but corrupt the stream, the other corrupteth the fountain. So saith Solomon, "Fons turbatus, et vena corrupta, est justus cadens in causa sua coram adversario."²

¹ Boundary stone.

² A just man falling down before the wicked, is as a fountain troubled with the foot, and a corrupted spring (Vulgate).

The office of judges may have reference unto the parties that sue ; unto the advocates that plead ; unto the clerks and ministers of justice underneath them ; and to the sovereign or state above them.

First, for the causes or parties that sue. "There be," saith the Scripture, "that turn judgment into wormwood ;" and surely there be also that turn it into vinegar ; for injustice maketh it bitter, and delays make it sour. The principal duty of a judge is to suppress force and fraud, whereof force is the more pernicious when it is open, and fraud when it is close and disguised. Add thereto contentious suits, which ought to be spewed out as the surfeit of courts. A judge ought to prepare his way to a just sentence, as God useth to prepare his way, by raising valleys and taking down hills : so when there appeareth on either side an high hand, violent prosecution, cunning advantages taken, combination, power, great counsel, then is the virtue of a judge seen, to make inequality equal ; that he may plant his judgment as upon an even ground. "Qui fortiter emungit, elicit sanguinem ;"¹ and where the wine-press is hard wrought, it yields a harsh wine that tastes of the grape-stone. Judges must beware of hard constructions and strained inferences, for there is no worse torture than the torture of laws. Specially in case of laws penal, they ought to have care that that which was meant for

¹ He that violently bloweth his nose, bringeth out blood (Vulgate).

terror be not turned into rigor, and that they bring not upon the people that shower whereof the Scripture speaketh, "Pluet super eos laqueos;"¹ for penal laws pressed are a shower of snares upon the people. Therefore let penal laws, if they have been sleepers of long, or if they be grown unfit for the present time, be by wise judges confined in the execution: "Judicis officium est, ut res, ita tempora rerum,"² etc. In causes of life and death, judges ought, as far as the law permitteth, in justice to remember mercy; and to cast a severe eye upon the example, but a merciful eye upon the person.

Secondly, for the advocates and counsel that plead, patience and gravity of hearing is an essential part of justice; and an over-speaking judge is no "well-tuned cymbal." It is no grace to a judge first to find that which he might have heard in due time from the bar; or to show quickness of conceit³ in cutting off evidence or counsel too short; or to prevent⁴ information by questions, though pertinent. The parts of a judge in hearing are four: to direct the evidence; to moderate length, repetition, or impertinency of speech; to recapitulate, select, and collate the material points of

¹ He shall rain snares upon them.

² It is a judge's duty to consider the circumstances as well as the fact.

³ Quickness of wit (that is, apprehension).

⁴ Anticipate.

that which hath been said ; and to give the rule or sentence. Whatsoever is above these is too much, and proceedeth either of glory and willingness to speak, or of impatience to hear, or of shortness of memory, or of want of a staid and equal attention. It is a strange thing to see that the boldness of advocates should prevail with judges ; whereas they should imitate God, in whose seat they sit, who “represseth the presumptuous and giveth grace to the modest.” But it is more strange that judges should have noted favorites, which cannot but cause multiplication of fees and suspicion of by-ways. There is due from the judge to the advocate some commendation and gracing, where causes are well handled and fair pleaded, especially towards the side which obtaineth not ; for that upholds in the client the reputation of his counsel, and beats down in him the conceit of his cause. There is likewise due to the public a civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, gross neglect, slight information, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defence. And let not the counsel at the bar chop¹ with the judge, nor wind himself into the handling of the cause anew, after the judge hath declared his sentence ; but, on the other side, let not the judge meet the cause half way, nor give occasion

¹ Bandy words, higgles. See note 5, Essay xxxiv. page 184.

to the party to say his counsel or proofs were not heard.

Thirdly, for that that concerns clerks and ministers.¹ The place of justice is an hallowed place, and, therefore, not only the bench, but the footpace² and precincts and purprise³ thereof, ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption. For certainly "grapes," as the Scripture saith, "will not be gathered of thorns or thistles," neither can justice yield her fruit with sweetness amongst the briars and brambles of catching and polling clerks and ministers. The attendance of courts is subject to four bad instruments: — First, certain persons that are sowers of suits, which make the court swell and the country pine. The second sort is of those that engage courts in quarrels of jurisdiction, and are not truly *amici curiæ*, but *parasiti curiæ*,⁴ in puffing a court up beyond her bounds for their own scraps and advantage. The third sort is of those that may be accounted the left hands of courts: persons that are full of nimble and sinister tricks and shifts, whereby they pervert the plain and direct courses of courts, and bring justice into oblique lines and labyrinths. And the fourth is the poller and exacter of fees; which justifies the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush, whereunto while the sheep flies for defence in weather, he is sure to lose part

¹ Attendants.

² Dais.

³ Enclosure.

⁴ Not friends, but parasites of the court.

of his fleece. On the other side, an ancient clerk, skilful in precedents, wary in proceeding, and understanding in the business of the court, is an excellent finger of a court, and doth many times point the way to the judge himself.

Fourthly, for that which may concern the sovereign and estate. Judges ought above all to remember the conclusion of the Roman twelve tables, "*Salus populi suprema lex;*"¹ and to know that laws, except they be in order to that end, are but things captious and oracles not well inspired. Therefore it is an happy thing in a state when kings and states do often consult with judges, and again, when judges do often consult with the king and state: the one when there is matter of law intervenient in business of state, the other when there is some consideration of state intervenient in matter of law. For many times the things deduced to judgment may be *meum* and *tuum*, when the reason and consequence thereof may trench to point of estate. I call matter of estate not only the parts of sovereignty, but whatsoever introduceth any great alteration, or dangerous precedent, or concerneth manifestly any great portion of people. And let no man weakly conceive that just laws and true policy have any antipathy, for they are like the spirits and sinews, that one moves with the other. Let judges also

¹ The weal of the people is the supreme law.

remember that Solomon's throne was supported by lions on both sides : let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne, being circumspect that they do not check or oppose any points of sovereignty. Let not judges also be so ignorant of their own right, as to think there is not left to them, as a principal part of their office, a wise use and application of laws. For they may remember what the Apostle saith of a greater law than theirs : "Nos scimus quia lex bona est, modo quis ea utatur legitime."¹

LVII. — OF ANGER.

(1625.)

To seek to extinguish anger utterly is but a bravery² of the Stoics. We have better oracles : "Be angry, but sin not ; let not the sun go down upon your anger." Anger must be limited and confined, both in race³ and in time. We will first speak how the natural inclination and habit to be angry may be attempered and calmed ; secondly, how the particular motions of anger may be repressed, or, at least, refrained from doing mis-

¹ We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.

² Bravado, boast.

³ Course, scope.

chief; thirdly, how to raise anger, or appease anger, in another.

For the first, there is no other way but to meditate and ruminate well upon the effects of anger, how it troubles man's life. And the best time to do this, is to look back upon anger when the fit is thoroughly over. Seneca saith well, that "Anger is like ruin, which breaks itself upon that it falls." The Scripture exhorteth us "to possess our souls in patience." Whosoever is out of patience is out of possession of his soul. Men must not turn bees,

"— Animasque in vulnere ponunt."¹

Anger is certainly a kind of baseness, as it appears well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns: children, women, old folks, sick folks. Only men must beware that they carry their anger rather with scorn than with fear, so they may seem rather to be above the injury than below it; which is a thing easily done if a man will give law to himself in it.

For the second point, the causes and motives of anger are chiefly three. First, to be too sensible of hurt, for no man is angry that feels not himself hurt; and therefore tender and delicate persons must needs be oft angry, they have so many things to trouble them which more robust natures have little sense of. The next is, the apprehen-

¹ And spend their lives in a wound.

*like honey bees, which
to withdraw their barbed
the wound & so perish
from themselves away*

sion and construction of the injury offered to be, in the circumstances thereof, full of contempt. For contempt is that which putteth an edge upon anger as much or more than the hurt itself; and, therefore, when men are ingenious in picking out circumstances of contempt, they do kindle their anger much. Lastly, opinion of the touch of a man's reputation doth multiply and sharpen anger; wherein the remedy is that a man should have, as Consalvo was wont to say, "*telam honoris crassiore*."¹ But in all refrainings of anger it is the best remedy to win time, and to make a man's self believe that the opportunity of his revenge is not yet come, but that he foresees a time for it; and so to still himself in the mean time and reserve it.

To contain anger from mischief, though it take hold of a man, there be two things whereof you must have special caution. The one, of extreme bitterness of words, especially if they be aculeate and proper,² for *communia maledicta*³ are nothing so much; and again, that in anger a man reveal no secrets, for that makes him not fit for society. The other, that you do not peremptorily break off in any business in a fit of anger; but howsoever

¹ "A gentleman's honor should be, *de tela crassiore*, of a good strong warp or web" (Bacon's speech against Duels).

² Having the sting of appropriateness.

³ Common revilings.

you show bitterness, do not act anything that is not revocable.

For raising and appeasing anger in another, it is done chiefly by choosing of times when men are frowardest and worst disposed, to incense them. Again, by gathering, as was touched before, all that you can find out to aggravate the contempt. And the two remedies are by the contraries : the former, to take good times, when first to relate to a man an angry business, for the first impression is much ; and the other is to sever, as much as may be, the construction of the injury from the point of contempt, imputing it to misunderstanding, fear, passion, or what you will.

LVIII.—OF VICISSITUDE OF THINGS.

(1625.)

SOLOMON saith, "There is no new thing upon the earth ;" so that, as Plato had an imagination that all knowledge was but remembrance, so Solomon giveth his sentence, "that all novelty is but oblivion." Whereby you may see that the river of Lethe runneth as well above ground as below. There is an abstruse astrologer that saith : "If it were not for two things that are constant (the one is that the fixed stars ever stand at like distance one from another, and never come nearer together nor go further asunder ; the other, that the diurnal

motion perpetually keepeth time), no individual would last one moment." Certain it is that the matter is in a perpetual flux, and never at a stay. The great winding-sheets that bury all things in oblivion are two, — deluges and earthquakes. As for conflagrations and great droughts, they do not merely¹ dispeople and destroy. Phaeton's car went but a day. And the three years' drought in the time of Elias was but particular,² and left people alive. As for the great burnings by lightnings, which are often in the West Indies, they are but narrow. But in the other two destructions, by deluge and earthquake, it is further to be noted that the remnant of people which hap to be reserved are commonly ignorant and mountainous people, that can give no account of the time past; so that the oblivion is all one, as if none had been left. If you consider well of the people of the West Indies, it is very probable that they are a newer or a younger people than the people of the old world; and it is much more likely that the destruction that hath heretofore been there was not by earthquakes (as the Egyptian priest told Solon concerning the island of Atlantis, that it was swallowed by an earthquake), but rather that it was desolated by a particular² deluge. For earthquakes are seldom in those parts; but, on the other side, they have such pouring rivers, as the rivers of Asia

¹ Utterly. See note 2, Essay xxvii. page 143.

² Partial, local.

and Afric and Europe are but brooks to them. Their Andes likewise, or mountains, are far higher than those with us ; whereby it seems that the remnants of generation of men were in such a particular deluge saved. As for the observation that Machiavel hath, that the jealousy of sects doth much extinguish the memory of things, — translating Gregory the Great, that he did what in him lay to extinguish all heathen antiquities, — I do not find that those zeals do any great effects nor last long ; as it appeared in the succession of Sabinian, who did revive the former antiquities.

The vicissitude or mutations in the superior globe¹ are no fit matter for this present argument. It may be, Plato's great year, if the world should last so long, would have some effect, not in renewing the state of like individuals (for that is the fume of those that conceive the celestial bodies have more accurate influences upon these things below than indeed they have), but in gross. Comets, out of question, have likewise power and effect over the gross and mass of things ; but they are rather gazed upon, and waited upon in their journey, than wisely observed in their effects, specially in their respective effects : that is, what kind of comet for magnitude, color, version² of the beams, placing in the region of heaven, or lasting, produceth what kind of effects.

¹ The starry heavens.

² Direction.

There is a toy which I have heard, and I would not have it given over, but waited upon a little. They say it is observed in the Low Countries, I know not in what part, that every five-and-thirty years the same kind and suit of years and weathers comes about again : as great frosts, great wet, great droughts, warm winters, summers with little heat, and the like, — and they call it the prime. It is a thing I do the rather mention, because, computing backwards, I have found some concurrence.

But to leave these points of nature, and to come to men. The greatest vicissitude of things amongst men is the vicissitude of sects and religions ; for those orbs ¹ rule in men's minds most. The true religion is "built upon the rock ;" the rest are tossed upon the waves of time. To speak, therefore, of the causes of new sects, and to give some counsel concerning them, as far as the weakness of human judgment can give stay to so great revolutions.

When the religion formerly received is rent by discords, and when the holiness of the professors of religion is decayed and full of scandal, and withal the times be stupid, ignorant, and barbarous, you may doubt ² the springing up of a new sect, if then also there should arise any extravagant and strange spirit to make himself author thereof. All which points held when Mahomet published his law. If a new sect have not two

¹ Motives ; a metaphor from the old astronomy.

² Fear. See note 3, Essay xxii. page 128.

properties, fear it not, for it will not spread. The one is the supplanting or the opposing of authority established ; for nothing is more popular than that. The other is the giving license to pleasures and a voluptuous life. For as for speculative heresies, such as were in ancient times the Arians, and now the Arminians, though they work mightily upon men's wits, yet they do not produce any great alterations in states ; except it be by the help of civil occasions. There be three manner of plantations of new sects : by the power of signs and miracles ; by the eloquence and wisdom of speech and persuasion ; and by the sword. For martyrdoms, I reckon them amongst miracles, because they seem to exceed the strength of human nature ; and I may do the like of superlative and admirable holiness of life. Surely there is no better way to stop the rising of new sects and schisms than to reform abuses ; to compound the smaller differences ; to proceed mildly, and not with sanguinary persecutions ; and rather to take off the principal authors by winning and advancing them, than to enrage them by violence and bitterness.

The changes and vicissitudes in wars are many, but chiefly in three things : in the seats or stages of the war, in the weapons, and in the manner of the conduct. Wars in ancient time seemed more to move from east to west ; for the Persians, Assyrians, Arabians, Tartars, which were the invaders, were all eastern people. It is true the Gauls were

western ; but we read but of two incursions of theirs, — the one to Gallo-Græcia, the other to Rome. But East and West have no certain points of heaven ; and no more have the wars, either from the East or West, any certainty of observation. But North and South are fixed ; and it hath seldom or never been seen that the far southern people have invaded the northern, but contrariwise. Whereby it is manifest that the northern tract of the world is in nature the more martial region : be it in respect of the stars of that hemisphere ; or of the great continents that are upon the North, whereas the south part, for aught that is known, is almost all sea ; or (which is most apparent) of the cold of the northern parts, which is that which, without aid of discipline, doth make the bodies hardest and the courages warmest.

Upon the breaking and shivering of a great state and empire you may be sure to have wars. For great empires, while they stand, do enervate and destroy the forces of the natives which they have subdued, resting upon their own protecting forces ; and then when they fail also, all goes to ruin, and they become a prey. So was it in the decay of the Roman empire ; and likewise in the empire of Almaigne after Charles the Great, every bird taking a feather ; and were not unlike to befall to Spain, if it should break. The great accessions and unions of kingdoms do likewise stir up wars. For when a state grows to an over-power, it is like

a great flood that will be sure to overflow ; as it hath been seen in the states of Rome, Turkey, Spain, and others. Look when the world hath fewest barbarous peoples, but such as commonly will not marry or generate except they know means to live (as it is almost everywhere at this day, except Tartary), there is no danger of inundations of people ; but when there be great shoals of people, which go on to populate, without foreseeing means of life and sustentation, it is of necessity that once in an age or two they discharge a portion of their people upon other nations, — which the ancient northern people were wont to do by lot, casting lots what part should stay at home and what should seek their fortunes. When a warlike state grows soft and effeminate, they may be sure of a war. For commonly such states are grown rich in the time of their degenerating ; and so the prey inviteth, and their decay in valor encourageth a war.

As for the weapons, it hardly falleth under rule and observation ; yet we see even they have returns and vicissitudes. For certain it is that ordnance was known in the city of the Oxidrakes in India, and was that which the Macedonians called thunder and lightning and magic.¹ And it is well known that the use of ordnance hath been in China above two thousand years. The conditions of

¹ No authority for this statement has been found.

weapons and their improvement are : First, the fetching¹ afar off, for that outruns the danger, as it is seen in ordnance and muskets. Secondly, the strength of the percussion, wherein likewise ordnance do exceed all arietations² and ancient inventions. The third is the commodious use of them, as, that they may serve in all weathers, that the carriage may be light and manageable, and the like.

For the conduct of the war : at the first men rested extremely upon number ; they did put the wars likewise upon main force and valor, pointing days for pitched fields, and so trying it out upon an even match ; and they were more ignorant in ranging and arraying their battles.³ After,⁴ they grew to rest upon number rather competent than vast ; they grew to advantages of place, cunning diversions, and the like ; and they grew more skilful in the ordering of their battles.

In the youth of a state, arms do flourish ; in the middle age of a state, learning ; and then both of them together for a time ; in the declining age of a state, mechanical arts and merchandise. Learning hath his infancy, when it is but beginning and almost childish ; then his youth, when it is luxuriant and juvenile ; then his strength of years, when

¹ *Fetching* seems to be used for *carrying*.

² Assaults with battering-rams.

³ Battalions.

⁴ Afterwards.

it is solid and reduced ; and lastly, his old age, when it waxeth dry and exhaust. But it is not good to look too long upon these turning wheels of vicissitude, lest we become giddy. As for the philology¹ of them, that is but a circle of tales, and therefore not fit for this writing.

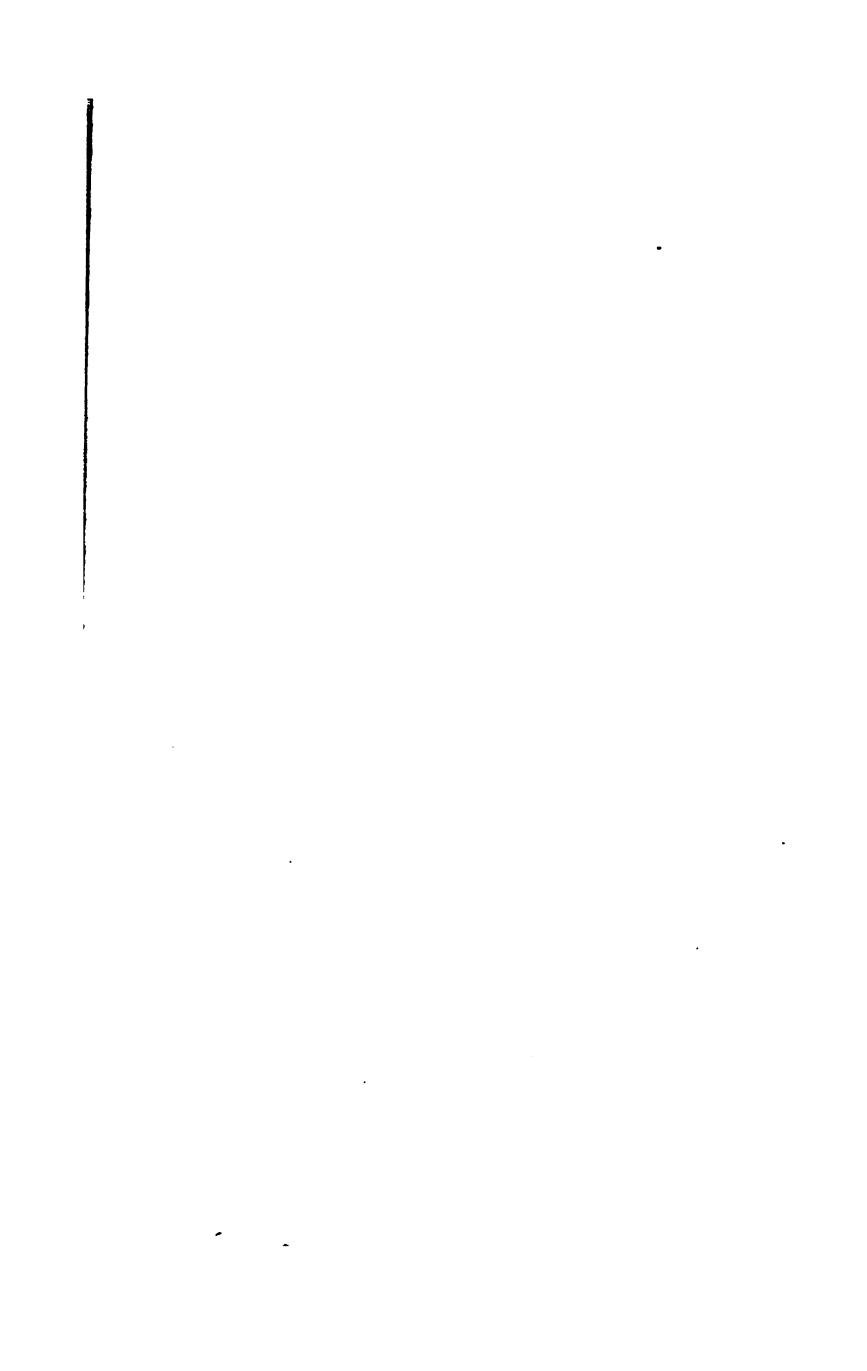
¹ The explanation or interpretation.

THE END.

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